

# On-Time Public & Advisory Committee Comment List

Alaska Board of Fisheries Tsiu/Tsivat Closed Waters

Anchorage, April 24, 2018

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Yakutat Advisory Committee .....	AC1
City & Borough of Yakutat .....	PC1
Kenai River Sportfishing Association .....	PC2
Dan Jirak.....	PC3
Terry Nininger .....	PC4
Al Montello .....	PC5
Alvin Kyte .....	PC6
Art Alger .....	PC7
Art Morrison.....	PC8
Austin Prindel.....	PC9
Betty Castronuovo .....	PC10
Bill McKemy .....	PC11
Bill Meier .....	PC12
Bo Matson.....	PC13
Bob Mueller .....	PC14
Bob Robinson .....	PC15
Bruce Bosch.....	PC16
Bruce Wulf .....	PC17
Carl Jasper .....	PC18
Catherine Harrison.....	PC19
Chap Milbank .....	PC20
Charles McConnell .....	PC21
Charles Pool .....	PC22
Charlie Repa .....	PC23
Clifford Canepa .....	PC24
Conny Frank .....	PC25
Craig Forsyth .....	PC26

# On-Time Public & Advisory Committee Comment List

Alaska Board of Fisheries Tsiu/Tsivat Closed Waters

Anchorage, April 24, 2018

---

Curtis Schlosser .....	PC27
Dan Anderson .....	PC28
Dave Groppoli .....	PC29
Dave Pipkin.....	PC30
Dave Robin .....	PC31
Dave Wilson .....	PC32
Don Jecko .....	PC33
Donald Langrock .....	PC34
Donald Schoell .....	PC35
Donna Alger .....	PC36
Ed Rabinowe .....	PC37
Frank Hall .....	PC38
Fritz Bracker .....	PC39
Gary Zornes.....	PC40
Gilbert Hum.....	PC41
Gordon Judd.....	PC42
Gordon Smith.....	PC43
Greg Davis .....	PC44
Greg Neislar.....	PC45
Greg Trulock.....	PC46
Guy Miner .....	PC47
Harold Frey.....	PC48
James Conrad .....	PC49
James Jenks.....	PC50
Jen Hosten.....	PC51
Jerry Young.....	PC52
Jim Conrad .....	PC53
Jim Corwin.....	PC54
Jim Gregor .....	PC55

# On-Time Public & Advisory Committee Comment List

Alaska Board of Fisheries Tsiu/Tsivat Closed Waters

Anchorage, April 24, 2018

---

---

Jim Griggs .....	PC56
Jim Irwin .....	PC57
Jim Mancuso .....	PC58
Jim Miner .....	PC59
Jim Perry.....	PC60
Jim White .....	PC61
Joanne Zornes.....	PC62
Joe Pale .....	PC63
John Anderson .....	PC64
John Dunnewald .....	PC65
John Goerner.....	PC66
John Jackson.....	PC67
John Mint .....	PC68
John Smith.....	PC69
John Sorensen .....	PC70
Karen Alger.....	PC71
Kate Sandberg.....	PC72
Ken Malic.....	PC73
Kevin McConnell .....	PC74
Kristen Quisno-Witt .....	PC75
LeAnne Reinsch.....	PC76
Leland Frankman.....	PC77
Linda Ott.....	PC78
Lisa Stenger .....	PC79
Lou DeMeres .....	PC80
Louis Ferreira .....	PC81
Marlene Smith .....	PC82
Marlys Ernhart .....	PC83
Marty Morgan.....	PC84

# On-Time Public & Advisory Committee Comment List

Alaska Board of Fisheries Tsiu/Tsivat Closed Waters

Anchorage, April 24, 2018

---

---

Matt Williams.....	PC85
Matt Withey.....	PC86
Maurice Bransfield.....	PC87
Michael Thelander.....	PC88
Mickie Maxson-Box.....	PC89
Mike Anderson.....	PC90
Mike Loudon.....	PC91
Mike Murry.....	PC92
MJ Westall.....	PC93
Mo Wicker.....	PC94
Pat Dolivier.....	PC95
Pat Riley.....	PC96
Pat Speranza.....	PC97
Paul Reinsch.....	PC98
Paul Winslow.....	PC99
Peter Truitt.....	PC100
Phil Erickson.....	PC101
Philip Gainey.....	PC102
Ray Barker-Smith.....	PC103
Ray Landgraf.....	PC104
Renee Sellers.....	PC105
Rob Rappaport.....	PC106
Robert Bolton.....	PC107
Ron Ott.....	PC108
Ron Tsoumas.....	PC109
Ronnie Roberts.....	PC110
Roz Sanders.....	PC111
Sean Bowditch.....	PC112
Sherry Roberts.....	PC113

# On-Time Public & Advisory Committee Comment List

Alaska Board of Fisheries Tsiu/Tsivat Closed Waters

Anchorage, April 24, 2018

---

Steve Lambert .....	PC114
Steve Smith .....	PC115
Terry Brosh.....	PC116
Tom Moe.....	PC117
Tom Prijatel.....	PC118
Vernon Broussard .....	PC119



## Yakutat Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes – April 7, 2018

Yakutat Advisory Committee met April 7th, 2018. Meeting was called to order at 7:10 pm . Roll call- present were Casey Mapes- chair, Glenn Israelson- vice chair, Scott Chadwick, Patrick Robbins, Jonathan Pavlik, Jeremiah Pavlik, Larry Bemis, Jeff Fraker, and Reggie Kirkovich.

Absent were Sam Demmert, Dave Stone, Bob Fraker, Sheri Nelson, Herb Holcomb, Jesse Pavlik.

Audience- Harold Robbins, YPD officer Paul Pajak, YPD officer Arlen Skafstad, USFS game biologist Susan Oehlers, ADFG sport biologist Matt Catterson, CBY manager Jon Erickson. ADFG Commercial biologist Nicole Zeiser on teleconference.

First order of business, Tsiu proposal. Ms. Zeiser gave a run down of how the ADFG proposal to move the markers below the Tsiu confluence, morphed into closing the upper half of the Tsiu to commercial fishing, and went on to say that a meeting in Anchorage to consider the issue again. ADFG has a new proposal, 242, which copies the original proposal for consideration. Comments- Jonathan Pavlik stated that if the changed proposal closing the upper half were to stand, it would effectively be the end of commercial fishing on the Tsiu. Jeremiah Pavlik stated the same. Jon Erickson stated that he will be going to the meeting to represent CBY, and pointed out that the Tsiu stakeholders meeting from 4 years ago was designed to eliminate conflict, and give a venue where all users could vet their concerns. Since it's establishment, meetings have been held, and the Borough has honored an agreement to build a cabin at the Tsiu, and fly police officers to the region to make sure there is no conflict. There has been none. He went on to say that a large number of letters opposed to closing the upper half to commercial were sent to him, which he forward to board support. He and L Bemis were both upset that old old pictures which had been entered as evidence two board cycles ago, were again used to call there a problem, as if they were recent. Larry Bemis will be going up to represent the Yakutat Tlinget Tribe. C Mapes explained that all of this was stated during committee, and he hopes the board will be more open to hearing it this time, with all the letters opposed to the change. He noted that even other lodge owners had written in that they are opposed to closing down commercial on the river. P Robbins asked how so big a change to a proposal happened, and why those affected were given notice to be able to comment on it. C Mapes explained that he and Ms. Zieser were asked, and we did comment that it would have disastrous effect on commercial fishing.

Jeff Fraker makes motion to support proposal 242, and allow the Dept. to just move the markers below the confluence, Scott Chadwick 2nd. No further comment. Israelson calls question. 9 yea's, 0 ney's, unanimous consent.

Next order of business. Yakutat AC moose proposal. The AC sent in a proposal to both Alaska Board of Game, and the Federal Game Board, and asked that the moose hunt on the East side of the Dangerous River be moved from Oct. 8th for subsistence, and Oct. 21 for non local domiciled hunters, to Sept 1 for local subsistence hunters, and Sept 15th for non local hunters. The intention is to hopefully allow for more subsistence hunters to harvest on the East side, and hopefully alleviate the hunting pressure on the West side. Currently, the hunts have only been lasting 4-5 days, and many hunters are not enjoying the hunt. C Mapes explained that the RAC committee recommended changing the AC's proposal to Sept 16 for residents, and Sept 30 for non residents, and forwarded the recommendation to the Federal Board. C Mapes would like to



accept the changes made by the RAC, and officially change our proposal to match the recommended changes. Our concern is that the Federal Board will change the subsistence hunt, and we need the Alaska Board to match this action by changing the non resident hunt to match it. G. Israelson makes motion to adopt the changes made by the RAC committee into our proposal, L. Bemis 2nd.

Discussion- P Robbins was concerned about putting too much pressure on the East Dangerous herd, J Fraker expressed the same concern. C Mapes pointed out that this is exactly how we've been hunting the Situk and Anken river corridors for years, and they are doing fine. C Mapes also pointed out that currently the avg. harvest level on the East side is around 20 bulls, and 30 on the West side. He pointed out that we're leaving 10 moose tags unutilized, and, at the most, we're only going to take on avg 10 more, and it will close anyway. He stated that if we don't, try this, or if it doesn't have the desired effect, we may have to look at other steps that many are hesitant to consider, to include, possibly going to a drawing hunt, or possibly doing away with proxy hunts for moose. S Chadwick commented he felt like it was worth a trial, if we don't like it, we can change it back. L Bemis calls question, 7 ayes, 2 neys( Fraker and Robbins) motion passes.

Susan Oehlers stated that USFS was going to be taking a look at new methods of reporting harvests to attempt to streamline the process.

Matt Catterson introduced himself to everyone.

C Mapes commented that new changes to subsistence fishing in Yakutat Bay are now in effect, and users need to be aware of the changes. He also stated that only two lines may be used by subsistence trollers, regardless of hand or power, and rods may not be used for subsistence. He also commented that he will be attending the BOF meeting in Anchorage to address the Tsiu issue.

G Israelson calls for adjournment, 9 ayes, 0 neys, meeting adjourned at 9:15 PM.

Casey Mapes- chairman



## City and Borough of Yakutat

### Tsiu River User Group Conflict Resolution

In the early 2000s the City and Borough of Yakutat (CBY) acquired management authority of approximately 21,500 acres of land west of Icy Bay from the State of Alaska as part of its municipal entitlement. This included the lands around the mouth and first mile or so of the Tsiu River with its productive coho salmon run.

Most of the fishing activity occurs during the busiest 3 weeks of the 6-8 week coho fishing season in August to early October. The fishable portion of the Tsiu River is quite short. Historically it has been, depending on weather and sea conditions, only about 3-3.5 miles long, 20 to 60 feet wide (though it can be as wide as 150 feet depending on conditions) and 2 to 3 feet deep. Recently that fishable area has shortened to as little as 1.5 miles, and the Tsiu River has become the primary area of flow. (See map included) Above the fishable part of the river is a "lake system" that is a braided swampy area approximately 5 to 7 miles wide with no clear channel to funnel fish in a concentrated way (so not good for fishing). Both commercial and sport fishers target the deeper (3-4 feet) holes in the Tsiu and Tsiu Rivers where fish congregate.

In the mid-2000s, it became evident that there were user group conflicts developing on the Tsiu River, during the commercial fishing season, involving conflicts between sport fishing lodge operators, and their guests, and the commercial fishermen operating on the Tsiu. The Board of Fish became involved, attempting to work with all the user groups to minimize conflict, and at that time directed the City and Borough of Yakutat to mediate to resolve the user conflicts. In 2007 the tension among user groups had escalated due to a combination of factors: a below average run size (36,300 fish); more anglers than average; sport fishers having gotten used to "having the river to themselves" in 2002-2004 when low salmon prices prevented a commercial fishery; high rainfall the preceding few years enlarging the lake and shortening the already small river; and the lack of regular enforcement in the area causing allegations of illegal commercial fishing acts. In response, and as directed by the Board of Fish, CBY conducted a series of meetings, and completed a carrying capacity study in 2009 with facilitated group meetings to reduce conflict and determine future actions. CBY hired Sheinberg and Associates, with Alaska Map Company, to conduct research on activities, and land issues.

After this conflict was put before the Board, the Tsiu River Stakeholders group was formed, consisting of the Borough and both sport fishing lodges and commercial interests. The City and Borough of Yakutat (CBY) agreed to undertake yearly presence and enforcement in the area, and each year hosts a meeting of the Tsiu Stakeholder, during the third week of August, at the startup of the commercial fishing season. All Tsiu Stakeholders including commercial fishers, sport fishing lodges, agency representatives, and CBY Assembly members are invited. A CBY staff and enforcement presence during the busy commercial coho season has resulted in little or no conflicts having been reported.





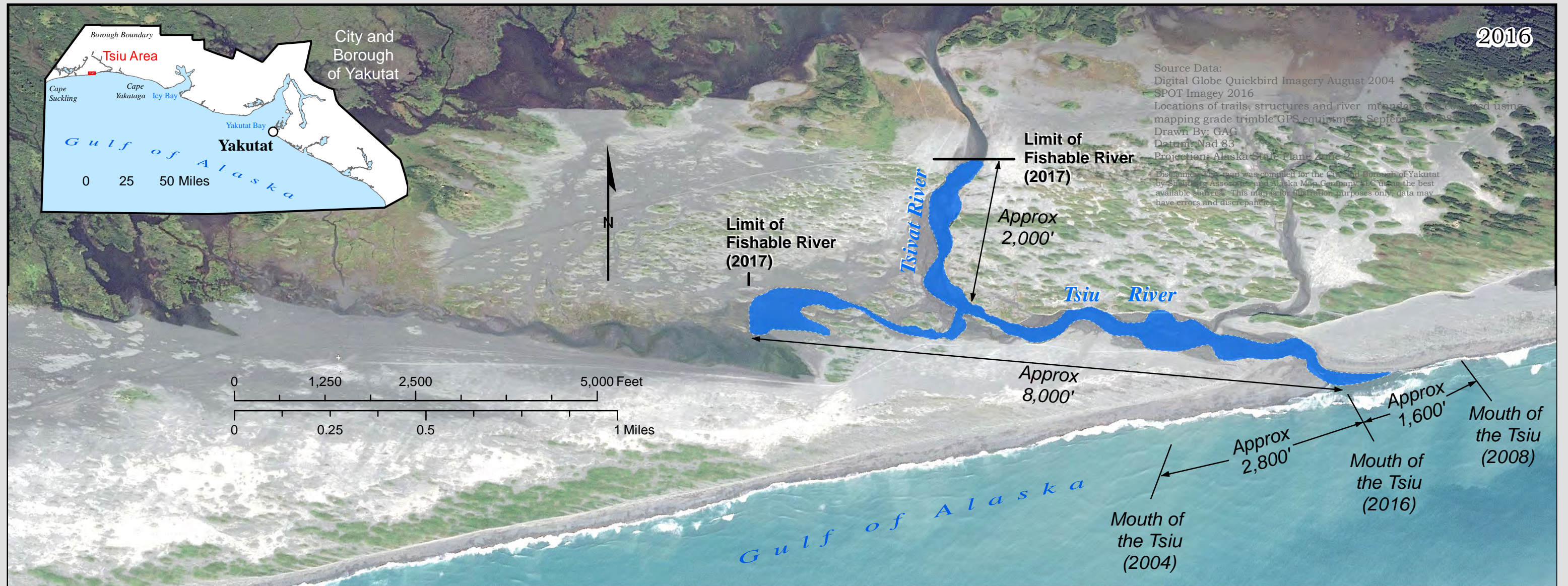
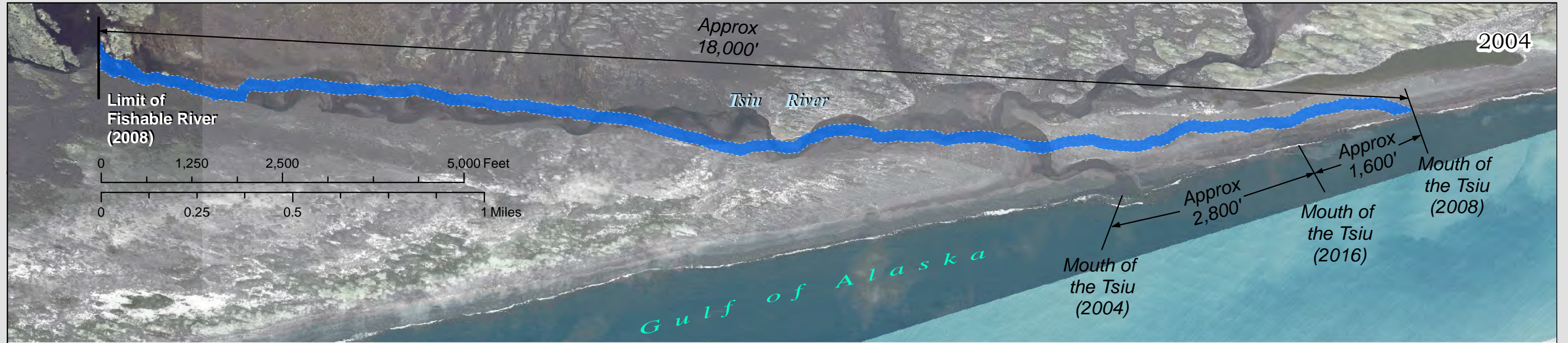
Since 2013, CBY has spent approximately \$124,000 in operations and infrastructure development plus extensive staff time to accomplish this presence on the ground, including chartering a flight to Tsiu to meet with stakeholders annually, on the ground at Tsiu, and construction of a 4 season cabin for a year round usable facility when management and enforcement needs require. An enforcement presence has been in place annually during commercial fishing operations. Stakeholder meetings have been held every year since the agreement was made with the Board of Fish to accomplish conflict resolution over potential user conflict for all users of the Tsiu and Tsviat Rivers. We state this specifically to point out how seriously CBY has taken this conflict, and the mediation process.

A report on the planning and research process (Tsiu River: Fisheries and Land Management Report, March 2009), representative 2016 enforcement report, minute meetings, and lists of meeting attendees have been provided to the Board prior to this written submission. CBY staff and management has been readily available to all Tsiu Stakeholders while on site at the Tsiu, by email or phone at any time, and in person should a Stakeholder care to schedule a meeting. No reports of conflict between Sport Fishers and Commercial Fishers has been observed by enforcement, turned in to CBY in writing, verbally or in person, or brought up at a Stakeholder meeting since this conflict resolution process started. Complaints among members of individual user groups have come up, generally reporting conflicts related to river ethics and crowding issues around popular fishing sites. CBY doesn't attempt to regulate ethics, and while we generally encourage the users of the river to "play nice", we have not become involved in mediating disputes between sport fishing lodges, day fishermen, or individual guides.

The Tsiu is an important fishing area to CBY and the economic health of the community of Yakutat for both commercial catches, and sport fishing revenues generated. In years of low coho abundance in the nearby Yakutat area, the commercial catches from the Tsiu are crucial to the Yakutat Seafoods fish buying and processing operation. In years of greater coho abundance, with local fish easy to obtain, the Tsiu is not always fished. Operating large planes to haul fish has become difficult with the changes in the Tsiu River making it hard to land a DC3. Yakutat Coastal Airlines has flown fish to Yakutat in de Havilland Otters the past several years, working around the weather as always. CBY has been studying the feasibility of constructing a landing strip capable of landing a DC3 aircraft on firm runway surfaces, looking at several sites between the Tsiu and the Kaliakh Rivers. This is at the request of both commercial fishing operations, and Sport Fishing lodge operations. For safety reasons, it would be better to be able to transport passengers in larger planes when it is necessary to get people out of the area during inclement weather. This would also facilitate transportation of fish.

CBY values the participation of all of the users of the Tsiu and Tsviat area. We were surprised when this issue came up at the February 2018 Board of Fish meeting, in the form of an amended ADFG proposal. The claim that there are on-going conflicts on the Tsiu between commercial and sport fishermen was an even bigger surprise. While this was certainly true earlier, it has not been true for a number of years, since the inception of the Tsiu Stakeholders group. This report of claimed conflict has come from the same source as it has each time, and this individual has not been participating in the Tsiu Stakeholders efforts to communicate, mediate, and cooperate.

# Tsiu River Area





Tsiu commercial harvest, effort, and escapement, 1970 -2017  
BEG: 10,000 - 29,000 coho

<u>Year</u>	<u>Harvest</u>	<u>permits</u>	<u>Escapement</u>
1970-1972	Not Fished		
1973	8,803	13	30,000
1974	8,258	7	15,000
1975	Not Fished		
1976	3,129	3	30,000
1977	5,691	3	25,000
1978	34,392	16	40,000
1979	32,621	35	25,000
1980	28,711	31	18,000
1981	30,109	27	20,000
1982	46,436	36	40,000
1983	20,119	14	16,500
1984	51,322	22	30,000
1985	63,922	33	52,000
1986	21,193	28	14,100
1987	35,297	39	8,500 Last survey 09/01/87
1988	56,116	38	16,000
1989	62,939	24	38,000
1990	33,827	28	16,800
1991	38,329	23	16,600
1992	92,290	23	26,500
1993	56,736	22	18,500
1994	64,135	25	55,000
1995	50,399	12	30,000
1996	35,697	7	20,000
1997	58,647	16	22,000
1998	70,955	20	12,000 No late surveys due to weather
1999	61,483	30	4,000 Last survey 09/09/99
2000	59,075	22	12,000 No late surveys due to weather
2001	31,734	10	17,000
2002	Not Fished	0	31,000
2003	Not Fished	0	35,000
2004	Not Fished	0	9,800 Last survey 09/01/04
2005	25,429	8	16,000
2006	26,438	12	17,500
2007	22,318	12	14,000 No late surveys due to weather
2008	49,292	10	25,200
2009	43,723	10	28,000
2010	77,780	17	25,000
2011	34,745	21	21,000
			*based on professional opinion there was at least
2012	45,821	13	*11000 15,000 fish but couldn't survey due to bad weather
2013	44,887	13	47,000 9/12/2013
2014	37,613	9	27,000
2015	16,968	6	27,000
2016	11,180	3	31,000
2017	Confidential	2	38,000
<b>10-yr Avg</b>	36,350	13	24,522
<b>Historical Av</b>	39,964	18	24,125



## Tsiu River harvest, effort, ex-vessel value for 2000-2017.

Year	Number of Permits	# of fish	Pounds	Avg. Weight	Avg. Price	Ex-vessel
2000	23	59,075	607,968	10.29	0.35	\$6,255,990.72
2001	11	31,734	324,479	10.22	0.15	\$3,316,175.38
2002	Not fished					
2003	Not fished					
2004	fewer than 3	Confidential		8.89	0.37	
2005	8	25,429	211,245	8.31	0.3	\$1,755,445.95
2006	12	26,438	256,081	9.69	0.56	\$2,481,424.89
2007	12	22,318	173,651	7.78	0.6	\$1,351,004.78
2008	10	49,292	474,433	9.62	0.46	\$4,564,045.46
2009	10	43,723	426,719	9.76	0.46	\$4,164,777.44
2010	19	77,780	765,976	9.85	0.37	\$7,544,863.60
2011	21	34,745	289,903	8.34	0.48	\$2,417,791.02
2012	13	45,821	440,805	9.62	0.47	\$4,240,544.10
2013	13	44,887	393,077	8.76	0.61	\$3,443,354.52
2014	9	37,613	346,885	9.22	0.33	\$3,198,279.70
2015	6	16,968	116,431	6.86	0.75	\$798,716.66
2016	3	11,173	104,420	9.35	0.5	\$976,327.00
2017	fewer than 3	Confidential		9.02	0.49	



April 9, 2018

Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Boards Support Section  
P.O. Box 115526  
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

RE: Comments on Tsiu/Tsivat River Closed Waters Board Generated Proposal #242

Dear Chair Jensen and Members of the Alaska Board of Fisheries (BOF),

Kenai River Sportfishing Association (KRSA) is a 501 c 3 charitable non-profit. Over the years, KRSA has supported projects in habitat protection, angler access, fisheries management, research and education. KRSA works closely with federal, state, local and private entities to ensure the Kenai River, the greater Cook Inlet area and elsewhere in Alaska remain healthy for fisheries, habitat and the generated social, cultural and economic values from this resource.

KRSA strongly recommends the BOF fail board generated proposal #242 regarding closed waters in the Tsiu/Tsivat River. KRSA supports the solution to the ongoing gear conflict in this area that the BOF adopted in Proposal 165 as amended in RC 331 in January 2018 at the Southeast Alaska finfish meeting held in Sitka.

Clearly an unresolved gear conflict between sport anglers and jet-boat driving commercial set net fishermen continues to occur in the lower reach of the Tsiu/Tsivat River. The record on this is long and well documented.



After years of hoping that this problem would go away on its own, the BOF took affirmative action, effectively saying, that sport anglers would have equal standing and the opportunity to participate in this economically important activity without risk posed by the “commercial jet-boat rodeo”.

Yes, the dozen or so commercial permit holders who participate in the in-river set net fishery would like to have the latitude to set their nets and subsequently drive fish into those nets by herding them with their shallow draft jet-boats without regard for any other legitimate user sharing the space. With passage of Proposal 165 as amended by RC 331, the BOF finally said “enough!” and passed a sensible regulation to bring into being an orderly in-river fishery.

If the Board generated proposal #242 passes as written, then what has been troubling in the past will once again effectively become the foreseeable future of the fisheries in the Tsui/Tsivat River. It is time to quit clinging to the disorderly management and allowing the character of the Tsiu/Tsivat River fisheries to be reduced to the lowest common denominator. To date, in no way have these fisheries been managed in a well-ordered manner. KRSA asks that the BOF please look to a better future – leave the language passed in Proposal 165 as amended by RC 331 stay in place.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Ricky Gease  
Executive Director



Submitted By  
Dan Jirak  
Submitted On  
3/28/2018 10:39:56 PM  
Affiliation  
self

I am writing in support of the "Emergency Petition Upper Yetna River Subsistence Fishery" that the Mt Yenlo Advisory Committee recently submitted. Our family of 3 have used the fish wheel for subsistence for over a decade. I will not add to what the Mt Yenlo petition as I fully agree with it.

Thanks for your time

Dan Jirak



Submitted By  
Terry Nininger  
Submitted On  
4/10/2018 11:00:00 AM  
Affiliation  
Individual comment

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April 10, 2018

Alaska Board of Fisheries  
AK Dept. of Fish & Game  
P.O. Box 115526  
Juneau, AK 99811

Re: Mt. Yenlo Advisory Committee Emergency Petition for Yentna Subsistence Fishery

Dear Alaska Board of Fisheries Members,

The Alaska Board of Fisheries should approve the Emergency Petition for a subsistence fishery on the upper Yentna River proposed by the Mt. Yenlo Advisory Committee. It is clear by reading the petition that a harvest of 100-200 king salmon, (about 1% of kings passing the fish wheel area), has no conservation issues and is a biologically allowable resource that meets the sustained yield principle as referenced in the Sustainable Salmon Fisheries Policy, (5 AAC 39.222). Given the unexpected closure of all king salmon harvest in Unit 4, current subsistence users now have to wait until July 15 to harvest any salmon.

Additionally, the Board should review the argument, by the Mt. Yenlo AC, that there has been an error in regulation of Customary and Traditional Use for stocks in the Yentna subsistence area. As referenced in the Petition "the Upper Yentna Subsistence fishery is the only one that has a specific exclusion for king salmon for a C&T".

Although I'm submitting this comment individually, our AC, (Mat Su Valley Advisory Committee), voted to support this petition on March 28th. I will add that some of the AC members felt strongly that subsistence petition should include other areas beyond the Upper Yentna River.

Terry Nininger  
Wasilla, AK





Submitted By  
Al Montello  
Submitted On  
4/8/2018 10:54:33 PM  
Affiliation

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## RE: TSIU RIVER

I am writing this letter to the concerned parties in support of a common sense approach to managing a world class public Silver Salmon fishery and resource that exists today on the Tsiu River.

No one group should feel that they are “**entitled**” to the this resource.

The fishery, if managed properly, can and will allow for an integration of both an enjoyable sport fishery and a commercial fishery given that each group is in support of each sectors right to a mutually beneficial, respectful sharing of the resource.

A group of anglers including me visited the Tsiu in 2011 during the second week of September.

Having looked into a number of Silver Salmon fisheries in AK we chose the Tsiu and booked our trip with Tsiu River Lodge.

We knew that the fishing was outstanding and that there was a commercial fishery operating on Tsiu going in.

As my brother Skip and I are both licensed guides and charter boat captains we have fished many angling venues.

We know and understand what passes as acceptable angling ethics between anglers and anglers and commercial fishermen targeting the same resource.

Whenever one group takes a stance that they are entitled to the fishery more than the other group problems usually occur.

Our group of anglers are all seasoned fly fishermen and have seen it all.

That being said none of us had any issues with arriving at a particular “swim” on the river and seeing a net placed in a location that reduced our ability to cover the more productive water.

We all treated the in Tsiu conditions as a “part” of that areas structure and fished around it, just like a blow down or log jam.....it presents an additional challenge is all.

The situations we found distasteful were when we were fishing a swim and the commercial guys would aggressively motor in and set their nets virtually right in front of us to the point that we had to move or run the risk of being run down.

We even dealt with that inconsiderate behavior by moving up or down and continuing to fish after we took a short break and let things “settle down”.

That being said the next several practices were **unacceptable** in any venue, anywhere and should be addressed.

As I said when nets were in place we fished around them.

As visitors we even bit our tongue and said nothing to the obvious indifference of “entitled netters’ when they motored up at full throttle to set their nets in our swims.

However even after we moved fifty yards or more to avoid the commercial guys by wading out in the middle of the river into a swim where would have a chance at the salmon that could squeeze by the nets the; boats continued to blow past us while we were wading deep and so close that we wear now being blatantly intimidated.

If that was not bad enough they now started to motor well above us and in a series of arched crisscrossing patterns of the upstream fairway above and back down towards the nets, corralling, this inconsiderate move basically ruined any chance we had to fish over holding fish and created an unsafe situation for two of our elder anglers.

I will tell you that back in our neck of the woods this kind of behavior of sorts does occur and is **NOT** tolerated as we will notify the Environmental Police and the U.S. Marine Fisheries folks who will intervene and make it clear, in no uncertain terms, behavior of this type will not be tolerated by any group.



In many of our venues which are **just as important** to our sport fishermen and commercial guys our enforcement agencies are present and **do take action**.

**In the six days we were on the Tsiu we saw one young woman our guide said was a F&G person, drive by once on an ATV, saw what was going on, and did nothing.....**

**Bad behavior knows no boundaries and should be dealt with accordingly.**

We each spent 10 days of our time and around \$6,000 each to travel to the Tsiu and fish in a breathlessly beautiful and remote area for beautiful Silvers.

Please consider a workable common sense management policy that addresses the offensive inconsiderate behavior of **some** of the commercial folks and presents the travelling angler with an experience where the negative aspects of commercial fishing on this shared resource are not worth mentioning to other anglers interested in fishing the Tsiu.

Kind Regards,

Alan Montello

10 Albion Lane

W Newbury, Ma 01985

Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Lousie Stutes



Submitted By  
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Submitted On  
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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

When I read that a solution had been reached to allow commercial harvesters to net in the lower half of the Tsiu River instead of the entire fishable stretch, I thought it sounded like an excellent compromise measure that takes into account the perspectives of both groups. When this forward-looking decision was put up for reconsideration, I was extremely disappointed.

I am a longtime fly fishing teacher and author and have been recruiting people to fish with me on the Tsiu River since the late 1980s. I have taken more than 20 such trips and have averaged bringing 10 people per trip. That amounts to at least 200 person/ trips. Many of these people spend \$5000 on their Alaskan experience. So I realize I have influenced upward of one million dollars spent in the Alaskan economy. Much of this has been repeat business. Yet I have already had people lose interest in coming back because the fishing experience has been diminishing. The cause they invariably give is the blatant disregard for other anglers and for the salmon fishery itself that they have seen from some of the commercial fishermen on the Tsiu. Some of this behavior has been well-documented in videos. The commercial fishermen are so effective in harvesting the fish, that there are often few fish to be found in the river on the days when the commercial fishermen are not fishing. And the fish that remain are often too traumatized from boats circling all day to strike.

The compromise which was originally passed minimizes the occurrence of such negative experiences while still giving the commercial fishermen the prime downstream water. The "new information," which sounds pretty shaky and possibly contrived, offers solution for only one of the involved groups. So it really doesn't even deal with the problem between user groups. It does nothing but perpetuate the problem. I have seen the salmon all but disappear in California and am already seeing signs of decline in Alaska. What is really sad is that those people who should be most concerned about protecting the future of the fishery—the local people—are the ones whose short-sighted perspective on maximizing harvesting may soon kill off that fishery. Even the robust salmon can only take so much mismanagement.

I strongly urge that the compromise measure be reinstated. If not for a balanced perspective between conflicting interests, then for the future of the salmon fishery itself.

Thank you,

Dr Alvin Kyte

57 Corliss Drive, Moraga, CA 94556

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Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Lousie Stutes



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## RE: TSIU RIVER

I wanted to take this opportunity to express my thoughts about the commercial harvesting of salmon on the Tsiu River in Alaska.

I have been putting together groups of fly fishermen and taking them to various fishing destinations since the early 1980s. I have been bringing such groups to the Tsiu River since 1987. I have continued to bring groups to the Tsiu because this trip has consistently offered excellent accommodations and food, friendly and helpful service, and excellent salmon fishing. But the salmon fishing experience has deteriorated badly, primarily because of the commercial fishing operations allowed to exist on the river.

On my trips north, I have almost always had at least 10 people-mostly repeat customers each of whom spends upward to \$5000 to make this Alaskan trip. These men have all looked upon this trip as an annual get together. For the first time, I am having trouble recruiting anglers to come to Alaska. The current commercial fishing practices on the Tsiu are killing off that river for sport fishermen.

The commercial fishermen on the Tsiu occupy virtually every spot where fresh-run salmon hold. These commercial fishermen repeatedly circle boats to herd and harass the salmon with utter disregard for any sport fishermen there. The commercial fishermen circled their boat so closely that my angling friends had to let their lines sink to the bottom to keep them from being cut by the boats.

We are told that nets can only be stretched halfway across the river. Yet I have seen places where less than 6 inches of water flowed over a wide sand bar. That shallow area is treated as "half the river", the net being stretched over the entire remaining water the only water the salmon could move through.

These commercial fishermen are so efficient at harvesting the salmon that we now have trouble catching fish on the day following the harvesting. If there are no fresh fish coming into the river on those days, there are few fresh fish left in the river.

As disturbing as this is, I am just as disturbed by the complete disregard these particular commercial fishermen have for the salmon fishery itself. They really have a short sighted view. Over the last 60 years I have seen the salmon runs in California diminish, and now am beginning to see the same type of events converge on Alaska salmon runs. Over 60 years of fishing has taught me that we can no longer treat salmon runs as if they will always be there. Unlike California, fisheries management people needs to step in actively *while* such runs still exist. These commercial practices on the Tsiu need to be seriously monitored and altered and violations emphatically enforced, if not for the balance with sport fishing, at least for the future of the salmon runs.

Sincerely yours,

Alvin R. Kyte Fishing Author and Teacher 57 Corliss Drive, Moraga, CA 94556 925-631-0419 [alkyte@hotmail.com](mailto:alkyte@hotmail.com)

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

my wife and family have been fishing the Tsiu for the past 16 years. Some years have been better than others, but we always have had a good trip.

We have had to put up with the commercial fisherman, they have no respect for the sport fisherman. Ive seen years they raced their boats up and down the the river fouling up all the lines in the water.

and years where they took just about all the fishable water with their nets, so on those days the sport fisherman were froze out.

I would like to add that for us to come to Alaska to participate in your wonderful fishing, that we spend almost 6 thousand dollars per guest for air fare, lodging, license,etc.

In closing I can't see Alaska Fish and game making a small stream like the Tsiu a stream for the commercial fisherman.

Arthur Alger

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

A few years ago, I was one of the group of five fishing on the Tsiu the morning of Sept 17th. We were fishing on a small strip of dry land across from where the planes land and near the north boundary for commercial fishing. Around 9:30 or so a boat landed downstream from where I was and they started setting a net right in front of one of our group, while he was trying to land a fish. There was no courtesy shown and no conversation between our guide and the commercial fisherman. We were made to feel as if we were trespassing on their private property. This was our last day of fishing and as with most trips the last day is the one that carries a lot of the memories, in this case it definitely left a black mark on the trip.

We've been coming to Alaska for the past twelve years and I have to say this is the first time that I've been run off by commercial fisherman. It would be disappointing to think that we would have to deal with this every time we came to Alaska to fish. There is room for both sport and commercial if a small amount of courtesy could be shown. Earlier in the week a commercial set a net near us and held off on driving the fish into the net until we moved. That worked and everyone was happy.

Anything you can do would be very much appreciated. If you need anything else please let me know.

Sincerely,

Marty Morgan

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I am a retired Nuclear Chemist and have fished on the Tsiu River since 1990. When I first fished the river it was not highly populated with fishermen or commercial fishing operations. One would not see many other fishermen during a day's fishing. As the years went by the river became more popular with both the sport fishing crowd as well as the commercial fishermen. There started to be conflict between the two groups. This conflict has become worse.

On two occasions I can remember a commercial fishing boat came roaring by me, while I was wading in the river, almost knocking me down. It has been my observation that in general the sport fishermen try to avoid the commercial areas, but the commercial fishermen pretty much do as they please. I have also seen a lot of waste from the commercial operation. Up river one runs into injured dying fish, victims of the nets used by the commercial fishermen. The group I fish with uses only flies with barbless hooks and we return most of the fish we catch to the river.

Several times I been told the issue of conflict had been addressed, but nothing seems to change. This year I noted the Board of Fish voted for proposal 165, a step in the right direction. Then I heard that the board wants to reconsider the vote. I could not believe you could come back and change your vote. It all smacks of politics instead of looking at the facts and making an intelligent decision.

Lastly I have to make a decision of my own whether I will be back to the Tsiu. The trips to the Tsiu are something I dearly love but are not cheap. Those trips must provide a good experience or my participation will have to go elsewhere. Counting airfare to and from Alaska, lodging in Cordova, meals and fishing days at the lodge on the Tsiu I spend approximately \$5000 in Alaska each year.

I would urge the Board of Fish to get this problem resolved with some enforceable regulations.

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

My name is Betty Castronuovo and I have been coming to The Tsiu River for about 8 or 9 years. I have spent tens of thousands of dollars to fish in the Tsiu River for a week's vacation only to find commercial fishing boats scooping up all the salmon so there is none for us to catch. This is not fair and right.

1. These guys on these boats that come into the river are loud, crude and rude scaring all of us and the fish too.
2. I have never seen this so called person that lives on the river and is an employee of the fish and game dept.-I think this is a misunderstanding. In my opinion there is no person.
3. These commercial fishing companies need to go somewhere else to catch their fish. There are a lot of us anglers paying big bucks for a nice fishing vacation and to encounter this problem is totally unfair, Also, this is not right for the camps and lodges on the Tsiu River that are hosting us and trying to please us.

Something needs to be done, hear us out.

Thank You,

Betty Castronuovo

Villa Park, Calif.

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I have brought two groups of family and friends to the Tsiu River to experience the fabulous scenery, excellent accommodations and service that AWOC provides as well as the exciting salmon fishing. Our first trip was in late September 2006 and once again in late September 2007. These trips were very special for us and we still talk about the fabulous experiences they were. But sadly we have not returned because of how the commercial fishermen acted.

During both trips we were surprised at the brazen attitude of the commercial salmon fishermen. I respect their right to have access to the salmon but do not support their actions when they put recreational fishermen in danger. I have spent a good sum of money to take my family and friends to the Tsiu and am extremely disappointed by the unprofessional actions of the commercial fishermen and clear lack of supervision of their daily activities.

There has never been a day of fishing on the Tsiu that we did not have to quickly reel in and get to the shore area because some half wit commercial fishermen was blasting directly towards our positions which we had been fishing in for sometime. This would happen several times a day as well know. It was obvious they intentionally came all the way across the river to harass us. I have even had occasions when I could not get to the side of the river fast enough and they would speed up stream between me and the river bank missing me by less than 30 feet! It was clear to me that the commercial fishermen believe this is their river and we recreational fishermen are trespassing.

Alaska affords the fishermen such unforgettable experiences but being run over by an out of control commercial fishermen on the Tsiu is not one I want to remember.

I do hope the authorities can provide some resolution to the Tsiu fishing conflicts between recreational and commercial fishermen before someone is run down or the commercial activities escalate to the point that we recreational fishermen stop coming to such a special part of Alaska.

Sincerely,

Bill McKemy

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**RE: TSIU RIVER** March 13, 2018

I have fished Alaska's Tsiu River annually for the past seven years, and thus followed the meetings you recently concluded on SE Alaska and Yakutat area fishing issues, paying particular attention to Proposal #165.

Proposal #165, as amended and initially passed, was a good compromise, but lobbying pressures likely caused a motion to reconsider a sound, and much needed, policy for the benefit of sport & commercial fishing interests. In my opinion, the board has an opportunity to mitigate a serious conflict between the two groups, and I hope they do so.

I personally have experienced nets anchored at my feet in water I was fishing, with the explanation: "we have to make a living too". In addition, I have had to leave the river, for my safety, because of a power boats running across my line while herding fish into set nets, when I occupied the area prior to their arrival.

Current commercial harvest methods on this small river will continue to be in conflict with sport fishing, unless separated. This is NOT the experience I come to Alaska for. I would like to believe that the \$5,000+/year I spend on lodging, air and license fees to fish in Alaska (and many others like me) is considered by the board when reviewing decisions concerning sport fishing interests. I'm not convinced the playing field is even on the Tsiu.

Thank you for your consideration.

W. R. Meier

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

Sport fishing and commercial fishing can coexist on the Tsiu river. But certain safe guards need to be maintained. It is extremely difficult to sport fish below the marker during an opener, which makes it essential that at a minimum the historic 1/2 mile closed to commercial fishing be maintained. Given stream dynamics there may not be holding water to fish within the proposed, reduced area above the marker.

Thank you for your consideration.

Bo Matson

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

My husband and I have been following closely the progress of Proposals 165 as presented to the "Alaska Board of Fisheries". It is with immense disappointment that we heard the Board was going to reconsider. Proposal 165, as amended was a good compromise which would have minimized friction between the different interests. It is unfortunate that politics have trumped good management.

We have fished the Tsiu for the past 17 years. Although the costs involved to fish this river exceed \$7,500, including air fare, per person depending on how long we stay in Cordova and Anchorage, we feel that is a unique experience. Throughout those 17 years we have had to contend with the blatant disregard for the river, the salmon and our presence on the river exhibited by the commercial fishermen. We have witnessed the outright waste of the resources by the commercial fishermen. I have photographic support of abandoned nets containing dozens of dead fish. On one occasion a trailer full of salmon was abandoned on the beach, it sat in the sun for two days before it was removed in the dead of night.

At various times we have been intimidated by power boats running over our lines as well as driving straight for us and turning at the last moment. The commercial fishermen are not only verbally abusive but at times display pistols and shotguns in an intimidating and frightening manner. Obviously the salmon run on the Tsiu is a healthy one with many fish, apparently the commercial fisherman feel they have the right to all of them.

We have never, in all the years we have been fishing the Tsiu seen any sign of a fish and game officer. In past years we have made our concerns known to the operator of the lodge. We would have reported the aggressive activities and wanton waste of fish had there been anyone of authority on the river.

It has always been our belief that there are enough fish for both the commercial fisherman and the sports fisherman and women. Indeed we support the State of Alaska and the fish and game department with our fees as well as the hotels and restaurants we patronize. This is not to say ALL commercial fishermen are intent on harassing the sport fishermen. In recent years there have been a few courteous commercial fishermen, but they have been in the minority.

We cannot express the disappointment we feel at the total lack of support your decision on proposal 165 represents. The actions of the commercial fisherman on the Tsiu river in regards to the sports fishermen is an outrage, they are aggressive, personally threatening and are an incredibly poor reflection on the State of Alaska and the Board of fisheries. It is apparent that the sport fishermen are not only unwelcome on the Tsiu but personally at risk of life and limb.

Sincerely,

Bob and Susan Mueller

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

It has been my pleasure to have fly fished on the Tsiu River several times. It is one of the most amazing Silver Salmon fisheries I have ever visited. Unfortunately I have experienced several close encounters with the commercial fishermen where they have driven their power boat up the river channel in which I was fishing at a distance of less than 20 feet away. Not only did the wake from the boat almost come over my waders but the pod of fish in front of me was spooked up river. Not sure if herding the fish was his intent but it was certainly an offsetting experience. I asked my guide if this was a normal commercial fishing activity and his response was; to his knowledge there was no oversight by the fishery management personnel to prevent these type of occurrences. I know in the 10 plus days I have spent on the Tsiu River I have never seen any fishery management enforcement personnel.

In my opinion management of the Tsiu River as a sport fishery should be very important to the responsible officials. Commercial fishing and/or lack of oversight of their activities could certainly have a negative influence. The amount of money brought into the Cordova area as a result of this fishery must be very beneficial. During the times I was there with two other friends we spent in excess of \$30,000. When this dollar amount is spread over the number of sport fishing people and the length of the season the result is a significant cash inflow into the local areas. It would be a shame to let commercial fishing or lack of control of commercial fishing negatively impact what the sport fishing population is contributing.

Bob Robinson

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**RE: TSIU RIVER** March 13, 2018

I would like to add my comments hoping you will have a chance to pass them along to the appropriate parties. We did not return to the Tsiu River the last couple of years due to the problems I experienced with a commercial fisherman running his boat next to shore where I was fishing. He ran down stream within 10 feet of shore even though the river was 100-150 feet wide at that point. In doing so he came within one foot of running me down and then turned as he passed by and started laughing. If I were to return to Alaska and the Tsiu it would only be if I was heavily armed in order to protect myself from another occurrence like this. It is very unfortunate that there are very few fisheries left in Alaska that even come close to the Tsiu but the Tsiu is being ruined for the recreational fisherman by the commercial fisheries.

Bruce Bosch

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I have fished the Tsiu River four different times. Five to six of us come up from Oregon for the wonderful fly fishing for Coho salmon that the Tsiu River has to offer. We have had a great time each year with the exception of having to deal with the commercial fishermen who "work" the river with their nets for the Coho.

A few years ago, we had been fishing a stretch of the river not too far up from the mouth when the commercial fishermen came in and put their nets below us and then proceeded to go round and round with their boat to herd the fish into their nets. They then went up stream from us and proceeded to walk down the middle of the river aslapping the water surface with long poles, thus driving the fish downriver back to their nets. The river at that point is narrow enough that they were only about three rod lengths (about 30 feet) from where we were standing and fishing. We were all disgusted with this and one of our guys yelled to the commercial fisher that he was ruining our "water". And the reply was something to the effect that he had to make a living. We told our guide that we wanted to go somewhere else to fish since our spot had be totally ruined.

So we moved to a new spot and had been fishing for over an hour when the same commercial guys came up on the opposite side of the river, put up their nets just below where we were fishing and then went roaring up the river with their boat coming quite close to several of the fishermen. Needless to say, the upstream movement of the fish to where we were fishing was severely restricted.

We enjoy fishing the Tsiu River because of the relative remoteness of the area, the great fishing and the wonderful hospitality of the lodge we go to. We also see fishermen from other guide camps on the river but have never had any conflicts. There is plenty of river for the sportsman fisher. However, it is really distressing to have this serene situation ruined by several commercial fishermen who are bent on getting their harvest regardless of what others are doing and have not been back in many years.

Sincerely,

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I have been keeping tabs on the hearings regarding the Tsiu river. Needless to say I am very disappointed about the results. The commissioners have apparently disregarded the concerns of the sport fishery component regarding the river.

I have, along with a number of my friends, been coming to the Tsiu for about 10 years. From the beginning We have been concerned with our interaction with the gill netters. In order to lessen these confrontations we have been coming later in the season. This has not helped.

Frankly, I am appalled by the apparent testimony of UFA stating the fishery is now closed to commercial. That couldn't be further from the truth! The river can be opened anytime and anywhere by EO.

A few years ago a gill netter and his partner waded through a section I was fishing pounding the water with oars trying to spook fish into his net down stream. When I confronted him his response was "f--k you! I'm just trying to make a living".

The Tsiu is a wonderful place. The fishery is unique and needs to be properly managed. I and my fishing partners have spent many thousands of dollars over the last ten years or so visiting this area. Frankly, unless something is done to regulate the abusive gill net fishery on this river We will look elsewhere. We are tired of putting up with these confrontations, I have no problem with commercial fishing per se. I do have problems with the way it is conducted on the Tsiu. Thanks Dan. Keep up your good work,

Carl Jasper

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**RE: TSIU RIVER** April 1, 2018

As a guide on the tsiu river, I have worked there several times since 2004. There was no commercial fishing going that season and I have to say that it was incredibly enjoyable not having to jump out of the way of a boat or have a net placed across a drop where my clients were clearly fishing. 25 yards away would have been acceptable. Subsequently, I experienced just that in the years following 2004.

As for a F&G person on the river, I only recall seeing one in my second year in 2005. Not a wave or a hello as I was struggling to get my completely buried 4 wheeler out of a soupy sand hole in the dunes near the river. I was stunned that a F&G person would not have stopped to say hi, check my guide license, and more importantly help me out.

In short, I hope that there will be some kind of meeting in the middle on these issues and make it right for all parties involved. It should be fair for all and not heavily one sided. Proposal 165 as amended does just that.

Catherine Harrison

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**RE: TSIU RIVER** March 13, 2018

I have fished the Tsiu River for at least 10 years. I used to fish the Lost River out of Yakutat but because of the commercial net practices there, the area became nothing more than a zoo and a lousy wilderness experience.

I spend on average \$4200.00 on lodging and airfare to fish for about 3 days on the Tsiu, including \$50.00 for a 10 day visitor license

I have seen the fish herding and fish waste on the banks by the commercials. This occurs generally right in front of a group of sports fishermen. One year, the commercials drove their power boat right in the middle of a stretch where a group of flyfishers had been casting. Then they placed their nets within a few yards of the sports fishermen, anchored them to the bottom and then they left.

I have never in all the years I fished the Tsiu, ever seen any fish and game person, badged or otherwise on the river. I have fished both sides and walked far up the river. I was checked on the Lost river however on several occasions. I challenge you to find in your records one instance where a badged person made a report of checking a license of a sports fisherman on the Tsiu.

Why should I come back to the Tsiu to have a good fishing experience, when nothing is being done about the commercials ?

As an attorney, it upsets me to learn that recent board action in considering reversing the vote on Prop 165 was based on backdoor, after the fact, information. What ever happened to the constitutional right to Notice and Hearing ?

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**RE: TSIU RIVER** March 13, 2018

I have been to the Cordova and Tsiu River area three (3) times since 1998. There was definitely a conflict between the boats and the wade fishermen on my trips. The boat operators would come right at me and other wade fishermen and totally disrupt fly fishing on this beautiful river. They did this to the point of endangering those of us wade fishing! We quit going to the Tsiu because of the commercial fishing/boat issue. My sons wanted no part of the conflict with the boats!

I have witnessed the dead fish in the river and on the land from the commercial fishermen. The only time I have ever seen a Fish and Game employee was my first trip in 1998. He did check my license and was with me watching the dead fish float by. He explained that the locals were legal in taking fish at that time from the Tsiu. This trip was in mid-September, 1998. My brother-in-law and I spent six weeks in Alaska on this trip after I retired.

On my first Tsiu week trip in 1998 I spent around \$6000 and on the trip in 2011 around \$4000. In mid-September, 2008 I brought my two grown sons at my expense for a week of fishing the Tsiu and spent over \$15,000 on this outing. I have been to Alaska on three other trips in the last 15 years.

I enjoy the beauty and the great salmon fly fishing on the Tsiu. My wife and I are discussing another trip to Alaska but will not consider the Tsiu until there is more room for the sport fishery.

Charles McConnell

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Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Lousie Stutes



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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I think the recent Board decision was fair and long overdue. I totally accept the new boundaries set by Proposal 165 as amended. This is a common sense, easy solution that does not hurt the commercial entity whatsoever. Anyone that looks at the facts cannot dispute this.

Charles McConnell 449 Meadow View Parkway Erie, CO 8051 303-604-2253 [Chuckdorothym@gmail.com](mailto:Chuckdorothym@gmail.com)

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**RE: TSIU RIVER** March 13, 2018

In past years, I was fortunate to have made 14 trips to the Tsiu River to fly fish for Salmon in that unique river. Those trips were wonderful experiences. Previously, I wrote to the Board in support of enlarging the closed area, which addressed sport fishing and commercial fishing on the river. The decision made at that meeting was fair and equitable to both parties

Recently, I learned that some, in opposition to that decision, have petitioned the Board to reconsider its decision. The Sitka Decision was fair and equitable to both Sport Fishermen and Commercial Fishermen and I recommend that you not make any amendments to it.

Charles Allen Pool

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

In past years, I was fortunate to have made 14 trips to the Tsiu River to fly fish for Salmon in that unique river. Those trips were wonderful experiences. Previously, I wrote to the Board in support of what came to known as its Sitka Decision which addressed sport fishing and commercial fishing on the river. The decision made at that meeting was fair and equitable to both parties

Recently, I learned that some, in opposition to that decision, have petitioned the Board to reconsider its decision. The Sitka Decision was fair and equitable to both Sport Fishermen and Commercial Fishermen and I recommend that you not make any amendments to it.

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**RE: TSIU RIVER** March 13, 2018

Between 1998 and 2014 I have had the pleasure of fishing on the Tsiu River as a guest at the camp of the Alaskan Wilderness Outfitters Company in either August or September. Each trip was unique. The setting is beautiful beyond words as has been the abundant supply of incoming Silver salmon.

Only one feature has prevented the experience from being perfect. That has been the bad manners, rudeness, and illegal activities of some of the commercial fishermen. Each time that I have fished on the river at the same time as the commercial fishermen, some of them, not all, have used their boats to interrupt me and others while we were fishing a school of fish. They would run and circle their boats between us and the school of fish so as to herd the school into their nets. Many times, they have done so without regard for our fishing and our safety.

At the times I and others have called out to them, they expressed their rudeness by saying such things as "I'm just making a living", "This is my income", or "F..... you". One year, a woman was fishing about 15 yards to my left. There was a school of fish between her and the opposite bank. A commercial fisherman raced between her and fish and commenced circling in front of her and herding the fish to his net. In doing so, he came dangerously close to her. When she called out to him, he responds holding up to her his middle finger.

I don't begrudge the commercial fishermen their right to fish or to make a living. However, they should do without infringing upon the rights of others and without violating the law. Greater enforcement of the fishing regulations is needed. Without enforcement, those commercial fishermen who have behaved badly and have violated the law will continue to behave badly and violate the law.

Respectfully,

C. Allen Poole

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I am writing this letter concerning the conditions on the Tsiu River as I feel it is a travesty to the tourism and travel industry and sport fishermen that visit Alaska. For some background, I have travelled to Alaska on 6 occasions over the years to fish (not in boats but wade or bank fishing) with 4 trips to the Tsiu as it has good Coho fishing and is a river that is amenable to fly and spin casting in the river or off the banks. Over the times I have visited, there has been a steady degradation in the non-commercial fishing options and experience on the river. On the days that commercial fishing is allowed there is little of the river to fish given the dimensions of the river and spacing for the nets. The commercial fisherman race up and down the "open" sides of the river and around the nets and spin the outboard skiffs around the net areas to disorient the fish into their nets. If you try to fish in any areas between the net sets you are by definition harassed by the commercial fisherman as they motor near you and try to intimidate you to move away from "their" area. There also seems to be a lot of fish left on the beach after they are gone--not sure if they are culling the catch or what the reasons are for that. I have not seen or talked to a fish and game person whenever I have been there and find it hard to believe that the state would allow the use of boats to herd or disorient fish as I thought that was illegal. In addition, as I am sure you are all aware, the Tsiu River mouth has moved significantly westward over the last 10 years and this has shortened the fishable river before you start hitting areas where the silvers start nesting/spawning and I am not sure if that has figured into how many nets are allowed on the river now vs. in the past as it seems significantly different to me.

I am not against commercial fishermen or commercial fishing on the river, however there needs to be some accommodation for the non-commercial use of the river. Harassment of the fish and fishermen is not a good thing for the river, or the state of Alaska. You can imagine the cost benefits to the local communities in Yakutat, Cordova, Anchorage, and the state as typically we (a group of 10-12) would fly to Anchorage, stay a couple of nights, fly to Cordova and stay a night or two there when looking at the front and back end of a trip, as well as the monies spent on supplies, dining, fisheries license, airfare, souvenirs/mementos, and gratuities.

Some type of rules to better share the river would be a good plan for the local communities, and state. I am sure you all are looking into different options such as, how much of the river can be commercially fished vs. sport fishing, or alternating days that the river would be open to commercial fishing so that if you were there several days in a row, you know there would be at least half the time that sport fishing would be reasonable, or some other method that everyone agrees would work for the river. I also do not understand how commercial fishermen who take fish by multiple tonnage out of the river every day or two, feel that groups of twenty or so sport fishermen with limits of 4 and aggregate 8 fish will significantly impact their living and ultimate monetary rewards of fishing the Tsiu River and therefore would be more willing to share the river and the benefits that tourism and sport fishing bring to the area.

In concluding, to be frank I have not been back to Alaska to fish for 5 years now and we have contemplated other rivers however, if this type of situation is allowed to persist on the Tsiu, we have no reason to believe it is not the case on other rivers in Alaska that would have similar access for sport fishing (and commercial fishing) and therefore do not anticipate returning until there seems to be some "solution" to the problems. We are not comfortable forfeiting the 8-10 days of vacation time and the associated costs to be disappointed in the end with the access to and type of fishing experience that results from this type of situation. I am hopeful that you will consider all these factors and parameters in coming to an equitable solution to the problem that exists in this river (and by extension I would assume others). I would be glad to provide other information if desired.

Sincerely,

Charlie Repa

713-206-2740

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The Woodlands, Texas

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I am from Portland, Oregon, and have fly fished the Tsui, for five days, a few years back. It was a great experience, although our success was limited on the days the nets were in. I am sure the commercial coho catch from the Tsui is a minuscule component of the fish landed in the Yakutat to Cordova region. This tiny river system is a superb sport fishery due to the water clarity.

Since the sport fishery has a much greater economic impact on your region you should give that fishery priority. The unrestricted commercial use of the river will eventually ruin the experience, and kill the sport operations, if not the run itself.

It may be hard to live in Alaska, and imagine rivers empty of salmon, but there once were thriving commercial salmon fisheries in New England, California, Oregon and Washington, that are now as extinct or remnant as the fish themselves. Institute the new proposals to allow sport and commercial interests to share the river, or risk the loss of both over time.

Sincerely yours,

Clifford S Canepa MD

10426 NW Arcadian Lane. Portland, OR

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I am a recreational angler and my friends and I have fished the Tsiu River for several years and I support the Board of Fish Proposal 165 as amended which, in my opinion, is long overdue.

It is simply unrealistic to think that sport and commercial fishing can be safely practiced simultaneously on the same stretch of the river. Restricting commercial netting to the lower first mile of the river and reserving the upper mile or so of the river for sport angling makes perfect sense. Both lodge owners and commercial fisherman deserve to make a living and this solution does exactly that.

Sincerely,

Conny Frank

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I have visited and fished the Tsiu 9 times in the last 12 years. I have NEVER seen a uniformed wildlife or law enforcement person on or near the river. What I have seen is an ongoing major conflict between the commercial fishermen and the sport/ recreational fishermen. I personally have experienced a commercial fisherman trying to run me down with his boat while I was fishing in the river and then laughing as he came within inches of hitting me. The river is simply too small and shallow to safely allow both commercial and recreational fishing in the same sections of the river. The ONLY reasonable solution is to provide a section of the river for the days the commercial fishing occurs as opposed to giving the commercial fisheries unrestricted access from the mouth to the lake. The commercial fishermen would catch as many fish especially if their section started at the mouth and the conflict between the two groups would be virtually eliminated. In addition a uniformed law enforcement official needs to be present on the river during the main fishing season to handle violations and enforce fishery regulations. Thank for the opportunity to comment on this important issue.

Craig Forsyth

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## **RE:TSIU RIVER**

To ADF&G and To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter to express my concerns and preferences on upcoming proposal for the TSIU fishery and other rivers on the coast. I have fished the Tsiu River about ten years out of the last twelve. I also can attest to the conflict and clash between the rod and reel sportfishers and the commercial fishers. I have witnessed and videoed the commercial takers spinning their boats upstream and downstream of their nets harassing and scarring the fish into their nets and saw many dead fish floating downstream afterwards.. Is that not the definition of "Wanton Waste".

I also vividly remember several years ago when we got out early and had staked a place to fish in a channel and after about an hour, here comes the roar of commercial jetboats and one landed right in front of me where I was fly fishing. A guy jumped out and started driving a stake to stretch their net on, I said to him "What are you doing", to my amazement he would not answer me but completely ignored me as if I did not exist. My background is 38 years military service from Vietnam to 2005, I retired US Army LTC (Lieutenant Colonel) out of Fort Richardson, I started enlisted and rose to that rank. I was not used to someone disrespecting me by not even acknowledging me or returning a response. I was not used to being treated that way. That young fellow does not realize how close he came to an extreme physical lesson in how to treat people and not disrespect them. I did not give 38 years of my life in the military to being disrespected that way. I have come to realize that seems to be a code among the commercial guys that they ignore us and treat us as someone who has no right to be there, they have all the license not us. We are no stakeholders to them. They get tons of fish, we get a few pounds.

My strong recommendation is that each year, the dynamic river channels be analyzed and new markers are set to keep these rude commercial fishermen away from the sportfishers to avoid confrontations. They seem to lack the common people skills to interact with respect.

Curtis c. Schlosser US Army LTC (Retired)

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I am writing this letter to relate my experiences while fishing the Tsiu River. I was an Alaska resident for 25 years; I am a retired Army officer and disabled veteran. I retired from Fort Richardson in 2005. I also was a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist in Alaska for ten years. I currently reside in Oregon and attempt to return at least once a year to fish in Alaska and contribute tourism dollars to Alaska enterprises. The experiences on the Tsiu make me want to take my thousands of Tourism dollars elsewhere.

The problem I experienced was conflicts with commercial fishers there in Sept of previous years. One day when the commercial guys had an opener, we (five of us) were already fishing in a location when the roaring boats of the commercial guys came and jumped out right in front of us and drove their stakes and stretched out their nets. They paid no regard to us as if we had any rights to fish there; they totally disregarded us as if we were not even there. Then they proceeded to spin their boats in front and behind the nets, we watched in Awe and Amazement as the hydraulic pressure of the waves created by their spinning boats dislodged already dead and strangled fish from the nets to float downstream back toward the ocean. This was clearly a gross example of "Wanton Waste" which is supposed to be prohibited in Alaska. Maybe different rules apply to commercial fishers; I guess they call it "By Catch". Why were we fishing with flies, we should just have been able to put on big snagging hooks and kill fish at will as they were doing. Is that the image Alaska wants to portray to the resident and tourist Sport Fishers that come and pour their money into the Alaska economy? In other years I have been standing out in the river fly casting and the commercial boats would come roaring by dangerously close and never slow down or once again acknowledge that I existed or had any rights to fish there. I understand there is supposed to be an ADFG enforcement officer on site at the Tsiu. Maybe they only see their role as enforcing laws on sport fishers and are blind to any infractions of the commercial bunch.

Experiences like these had a big impact on my leaving Alaska and greatly dampen my desire to come back and even attempt to fish when harassed and being exposed to such waste as I witnessed. I strongly recommend that the Board of Fisheries look into this matter and come up with remedies that respect the fishing rights of all users and protect the natural resources such as Tsiu Silver Salmon.

Curtis Schloser

388 Westminster dr.

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Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Lousie Stutes



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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I have sport fished for Silver Salmon on the Tsiu River in Alaska 6 of the last 12 years. The Tsiu is a unique place and resource. I have followed with interest the developments of the Alaska Board of Fish, in their efforts to balance the legitimate users of the fishery — commercial and sport, while maintaining the resource.

Most years I have observed an escalation of behavior on the Tsiu that has become aggressive and dangerous. I believe the causes of this are:

1. Though mentioned in testimony before the Board, the river is not closed to commercial fishing.
2. The Tsiu is a shallow river with narrow channels that are often no more than 3 feet deep. As you are aware, it is also short in length. Commercial fisherman use motor boats to "herd" salmon into set nets. I have observed this taking place with my own two eyes for several years. The nets are often strung all the way across the river. When this happens there is zero escapement for Salmon to swim up-stream where the sport fisherman are relegated to. Add to this, commercial motor boat operators who seem to enjoy terrorizing sport fisherman — and you have a dangerous brew.
3. Regarding the unsafe use of motor boats, I have had run in while fishing on the river with commercial fishermen driving these boats. On two separate occasions, a motor boat was run past me at full throttle no more than 4 feet away while I was fishing. I got the message loud and clear — "get out of the river or else".

What is the big deal of having the river divided into commercial and sport users sections? The solution offered under 165 as amended makes total common sense. How could the commercial fishery be harmed by this solution?

The last point I wanted to mention is that I spend about \$5,000 in Alaska every trip I make. There are usually 4 members in our group — about \$20,000 per year. As I mentioned, we have done this for about 10 years, about \$200,000 into the local Alaska economy from just a group of 4 fly fishermen. The word is getting around on the West Coast in the lower 48 about what is going on up on the Tsiu. The status quo is not good — for any of us.

I urge the Board to not reconsider this issue. Thank you for your consideration.

Dan Anderson Girdwood, Alaska 99587 [dananderson83@yahoo.com](mailto:dananderson83@yahoo.com)

Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Lousie Stutes



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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

This note pertains to my experiences fishing on the Tsiu river in alaska. I have taken two trips there to fish silver salmon. I must say that the last trip was a real eye opener. I was shocked to see how us sports fishermen were treated by the commercial fishing people also using the river. On one occasion I had to rapidly reel in my fly line or have it cut off by a boat speeding up the river to announce their start of the netting process. On another ,boats would speed up to my fishing location and rapidly turn causing a large wake-an attempt to get me out of there. I also saw nets placed all the way across the river to capture incoming salmon, effectively cutting off any fish that I might have a chance to catch with my fly rod.

At no time in any of my 8 days on that river have I ever seen an official from Fish and Game monitoring either people fishing or netting.

These salmon fishing trips my partner and I take are not cheap. Outfitter plus airfare to cordova runs us 5000+ and then there is the price of hotels and meals before we get to the river.

I am not interested in fishing the alaska rivers and being harassed by commercial fishers who want to "bully" the people on shore who are trying to catch a fish with rod and reel.Can something be done about this? I hope you can make a decision that is not politically motivated.

Sincerely,

David Groppoli St Paul ,Minnesota gropps@comcast.net

Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Lousie Stutes





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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I have fished the Tsiu river three times. Every time was a wonderful fishing experience other than the constant presence and detracton of the commercial fish boats, planes and people. These factors seriously detracted from my experience on the Tsiu. The noise ,sight and presence of these commercial operations made the experience more of an exercise of patience and tolerance rather than the "wilderness experience" I had planned to have.

The Tsiu is a beautiful river in a glorious place. The commercial fishing operation is a huge distraction to anyone trying to experience a wilderness fishing trip and pristine environment. I have not been back to the Tsiu for many years. The only reason for this is that I do not want nets, noisy boats and a lot of commercial fisherman ruining my fishing trip. A trip to the Tsiu a very enjoyable experience, if it were not for the constant distractions caused by the commercial fishing operation.

I have never seen or talked to or seen a game and fish department employee on the Tsiu. If the department would monitor the sporty fishermen on the Tsiu, they would quickly determine that the sport fishermen do not want the commercial operation there and that it seriously detracts from their enjoyment and desire to return for a very expensive trip that falls short of their desire for a true" Alaska Wilderness Experience."

Please curtail or stop the commercial fishing operation on the Tsiu, so that sport fishermen can fully enjoy the Tsiu.

Sincerely Yours,

David Pipkin

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I have been following the progress of the talks for new regulations on the Tsiu. The board's reconsideration action smells of back room bargaining that these public discussions were designed to eliminate. Too bad that these folks can get away with underhanded law making and think no one notices.

The bad part is that they used the excuse of finding new information (all one sided) as the reason for their decision. What happened to checking facts and taking testimony from both sides? If due process had occurred, big holes would have been seen in the "new facts" and new vote would have been seen as obvious collusion.

From my position as a sport fisherman who has enjoyed the Tsiu for more that 20 years:

1. There is conflict between the sport and commercial anglers. I have personally been run of the river by power boats herding fish into the nets. I have several times had to move as nets an boats and workers positioned their equipment. Funny how the fees I pay to lodges and the fact that I had been fishing a spot for a few hours are completely ignored and no one comes to my aid. Except Dan Earnhart. Through his actions the commercial fisherman are now more polite when they run you out of your fishing spot.
2. The City of Yakutat should loose their right to lodge fees every time the commercial fishermen put in and spoil the sport activity!
3. In 20 years I have seen F&G folks only twice. Not at all in the past 5 or so years. Of course I'm only there for a week at a time. I do see commercial fishermen every time.
4. Weather controlling, tote bins of fish are left to sit for what seems like days. I certainly would not buy them.
5. The conflict resolution team did not do their job. Why were they called to study a situation and suggest solutions if there was no conflict?
6. This long standing problem needs an agreed solution. This is a long river and the same fish swim the entire length. If sport anglers are willing to give up prime location at the mouth to get agreement why not move to find a way to work together. Yakutat gets paid to do this and should get it done.
7. Sport fees are substantial. In addition to the excellent experience afforded to us by the lodge, the Alaska experience is suffering because of mismanagement of this river.

Please do your best to set this right. We have a small river in a large wilderness with substantial improvements investment. We should ALL be able to use it to our best advantage.

Thank You,  
Dave Robin

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I have fished for silvers on the Tsiu four times in the past twenty years. It is an expensive trip flying up to the Tsiu for a week of fishing but it has always been worth the cost until my latest trip. On that trip the commercial fishermen placed nets to within a few feet of shore - while we were fly fishing along that exact shore. They then herded the salmon into the nets with their power boats to basically empty the river of silvers.

My friends and I truly enjoy everything about the Tsiu. Five of us fished in Alaska twelve years in a row but with deep regret we are no longer considering the Tsiu. We expect rain, wind, and sandstorms but not a barren river on two of our five fishing days.

Please, I ask the Board of Fisheries to look for a possible better means of managing this fishery.

I will look forward to hearing how this matter is resolved and hopefully being able to return to the Tsiu.

Hopefully,

Dave Wilson

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Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Lousie Stutes



Submitted By  
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4/8/2018 11:37:05 PM  
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po box 1403  
1324 Sweetwood Drive, Colorado 80239

**RE: TSIU RIVER** March 13, 2018

I have fished five years on the Tsiu River during the latter part of September each of those years. During this time, I have observed the commercial fishermen and their operations which took place along the same stretch of the lower river that we fish.

Since the Tsiu River is such a short river, the fish tend to turn "color" rather rapidly and as a result, we concentrate our fishing on the lower sections, wishing to keep only bright, firm salmon. In the approximate 25 days of my fishing on the river, I have never encountered an Alaskan Fish and Wildlife employee on the river.

I have seen first-hand the herding of fish by the commercial fishermen numerous times. One of our fishing buddies was standing upon a small sand spit in the middle of the river and a boat pulled up just beside him and started putting out his nets. They then started to herd the fish towards the nets. Another year, four of us were fishing next to each other and three commercial fishermen came wading down the river with long poles, splashing the water to herd the fish into their nets. They waded close enough to us that we could hit them in the head with a fly cast. One of our party yelled at the guys and one of them replied, saying something about "they had to make a living". We quit the area in disgust.

Several other times during these years, I have seen them set out their nets in our vicinity and then start to herd the fish with their outboard motor boats by zooming around and around the river driving the fish to their nets. So much for the serenity of fishing in an Alaska wilderness area! We often abandon the area we have been fishing but then have to go up river to find a spot where the fish are less abundant and have started to turn color.

Sincerely,

Don Jecko

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Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Lousie Stutes



Submitted By  
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**RE: TSIU RIVER** April 3, 2018

ARE WE LIVING IN AMERICA?

I could not believe what I have been reading about the possible reversal of Proposal 165 on the Tsiu R. fishery issue and the conflict between the commercial fish harvesters and the sport fishers. What happened to America living under the rule of law and truth? Despite the conclusive video and I witness testimony that was presented to the Alaska Board of Fish, a vote to consider reversal was allowed. Local politics, control and the threats of retaliation just plane stinks.

I have enjoyed fly fishing the Tsiu R. annually from 1993 to 2016. Since we have fish limits, 90% of my fish are released. On my break, I would talk to the hard working young couples during their strenuous efforts during their Coho harvest. There was a mutual respect between us, and we abided by the code of sharing and conservation. A few years ago a breed of selfish, rude, inconsiderate, in your face, immature commercial fisherman appeared on the Tsiu R. They would hauntingly drop the anchor of their net right at your feet. A net that crossed over 95% of the river. While herding the Coho with their boat, these same fisherman would laughingly run over my fly line. Both of these obnoxious actions were videotaped and previously documented. Yet there is supposedly some mystery F&G employee on site and has never submitted a complaint. IS THIS AMERICA?

I have also seen Coho waste lying on the beach the day after a commercial harvest.

What was the information that was presented to the Board that changed their decision on Proposal 165? Perhaps I could add to the discussion on this matter.

I have a great respect for the heritage of the Yakutat Indians. There is no reason why we cannot share the beautiful fishery of the Tsiu River. In my youth, I had the sincere pleasure of knowing some of the elders of a small Indian tribe in Northwestern California. If they over grazed a pasture next to our remote cabin horse pasture with their cattle, they would drop off a sack of grain on their next visit. In respect of their heritage, I maintain some of their old Indian summer migrating and bartering trails.

One must not forget the positive monetary impact of the sport fishermen to your area and the state of Alaska. Airlines, lodging, stores, restaurants and licenses are just a few to consider. A properly managed fishery will benefit all. It is a win, win situation!

Sincerely,

Don Langrock  
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Submitted By  
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**RE: TSIU RIVER** March 13, 2018

September 2014 completed my fifteenth consecutive trip to the Tsiu River, Alaska. It was my worst fishing experience here or anywhere!

Many years ago was my first experience observing commercial fishing operations on the river. There was a mutual respect between the commercial fishermen and the anglers. During my break period, I had the opportunity to talk to some of the commercial fisherman, some of whom were hard working husbands and wives, trying to make a living. They gained my deepest respect. Some of them apologized to us for their activities but they operated within the law.

However, in recent years there has been an increase in the violations of accepted legal commercial fishing practices.

1. The illegal practice of herding fish into the nets by spinning their boats and forcing the fish into the nets verses the natural captivity of fish swimming into the nets was most disturbing. The bow man was tauntingly laughing and waving to us. The aural effect of the boat motors was also altering the natural behavior of the fish.

2. Nets were anchored more than halfway across the river. This year some were placed 90% across the river and later reversed to cover the remaining 10%. This was done in front of a line of anglers. A net anchor was dropped haughtily at the feet of one of our guides.

3. One of the boats circled within ten feet of shore in front of me and ran over my fly line. He continued to harass the anglers by obstructing our casting and herding the salmon into the nets.

4. Miraculously, when peace officers responded to the complaints and visited the river, all conditions changed to an orderly harvest by the commercial fishermen. It was obvious that there had been an internal "tip off." The following day the few obnoxious commercial fishermen returned to their unlawful practices.

Until these violations are corrected, I would not recommend anyone to fish this river. Unfortunately, the fishing lodges, business in Yakutat and the state of Alaska will be negatively impacted.

People from different parts of the world seek to experience the natural beauty of Alaska and their fine people. With proper area restrictions, the mutual lawful sharing of the Tsiu River can be returned.

Respectfully,

Donald A. Langrock P.O. Box 1416 Williams CA 95987-1416 [dslangrock@earthlink.net](mailto:dslangrock@earthlink.net)

Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Lousie Stutes



Submitted By  
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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

Having fly fished the Tsiu four times over the past twenty years, I was greatly disappointed on my last trip to the Tsiu river. The commercial fishermen were laying their nets right up to the shore not twenty feet from where we were fishing. They then herded the salmon to the nets and harvested the catch, except for a few salmon strewn along the banks. Not only did all the noise and activity completely ruin the delight of being in Alaska and the enjoyment of fishing such a beautiful river. but it also put me in doubt as to why I was spending so much money for such an unnatural and unfriendly experience.

I have fished for two week periods in many places in Alaska both alone, with my wife and at least twelve times with five friends from the San Diego area. Unless there is a meaningful change in the commercial/sports fishing regulations for the Tsiu we will not be returning to this river.

With hope of a return to the Tsiu,

Donald Schoell

Rancho Santa Fe, California

Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Lousie Stutes



Submitted By  
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4/10/2018 3:59:39 AM  
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**RE: TSIU RIVER** March 13, 2018

My family and I have been going to the Tsiu each year for the past 14 years for fishing and friendship. We enjoy the area and love seeing how it changes each year dependent on weather and tides.

We enjoy the abundance of wildlife – Bears, seals, eagles, trumpet swans, etc, and enjoy seeing them in their native environment.

Over the years – we have seen a marked increase in the amount of aggressive power boating on the river. Aside from being noisy and disturbing the natural tranquility of the region, it is more than dangerous to have them on the river at the same time there are fisherman.

We have never had the pleasure of seeing a game warden in the area. And due to the remoteness of the area – and the close community atmosphere – I imagine that “surprise” visits are hard to perform since the only way in and out is via air and radio waves travel faster than planes so poor behavior can be curtailed before the inspector arrives

We spend an average of \$20,000 per trip on airfare, lodging, and meals on our annual trip, and would hate to see the area destroyed by overfishing, noise pollution, and people acting badly.

We respectfully request that you keep the decision to limit the amount of commercial harvesting area on such a valuable and remarkable recreational site in tact.

Sincerely,

Donna Alger

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**RE: TSIU RIVER** March 13, 2018

Thank you for continuing your effort to make the fishing experience on the Tsiu River even better. I have been fortunate to have spent vacation time on the Tsiu for the past 20 years. Doubly fortunate to spend time with AWOC for the best in Alaskan wilderness adventure in the business.

In my 40+ years of fishing vacations, the commercial fishing on the Tsiu is unique. Never before or elsewhere have I been run out of my fishing hole by a power boat. I enjoy wading and fly casting to salmon. The commercial fishermen just set their nets near where you stand fishing and run the fish into the nets with power boats running over you lines in the process. A wading fisherman has no choice but to leave the river for safety. It is hard to argue while wearing waders and carrying a fly rod with power boats swerving just feet from you while they clean all the fish out of the river and deprive you of your spot on a stretch of public open water where you were fishing.

Vacation cost on the Tsiu is significant, as is the sportsman's dollar in Alaska, and AWOC excels in giving you what you pay for. The commercial fishermen have no respect for the tourist dollar or the tourist's safety, sport fishing or common decency.

Sport fishermen are always willing to share a river. I have never heard of a sport fisherman asking a commercial fisherman to move his net no less try to run him off. The Tsiu should be as available to me with my current fishing license as it is to anyone else.

Please continue your work to assure that we all have fair access to the Tsiu River. I look forward to fishing there again.

Tight lines,

Ed Rabinowe

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**RE: TSIU RIVER** March 13, 2018

This letter is in support of proposals 165 as amended to change the commercial harvest area within the Tsiu River system and to increase the area available to the sport fishery.

I have sport fished the Tsiu River approximately 35 days over 5 years since 2003 and have witnessed conflicts between sport and commercial fisherman. This has included physical displacement of sport fisherman by commercial fisherman, herding salmon into commercial nets, and removal of salmon from sites being fished by sport fishermen. While I have no specific data, I am sure the monetary value of each salmon in the Tsiu River is far greater to the sport fishery than it is as a harvested commercial fish. This is partly due to the fact that most sport caught fish are released to either be recaptured as sport caught fish or allowed to escape and spawn. Personally, my sport catch has resulted in about 10 salmon released fish for each one kept.

The area available to commercial salmon fishing should be reduced. I urge the keeping of proposal 165 as amended to reduce these conflicts. The days when no commercial harvest is allowed should be a minimum of two per week. Each of these is reasonable, appropriate and easily enforceable.

Thank you for consideration of these requests.

Sincerely,

Frank Hall

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I am aware that you have been discussing the use of the Tsiu River between commercial fisheries and sport fishing.

I have been fishing the Tsiu for about ten years and really amazed how the commercial fishing has had little respect for the sport fishing population.

The most disturbing practice is the herding of fish when the nets are up. The commercial people have no concern for sport fishing and will drive their powered boats right up to the sport fishers without regard to them. I find this very inappropriate and really distract the fishing on the days the nets are up. In the ten years that I have been fishing there I have yet to see any fish and game personal in the vicinity.

This problem should not be that difficult to correct. Especially with amended proposal 165.

Your help in this matter will be greatly appreciated.

Very truly,

Frederick A. Bracker

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I would like to express my concerns to your recent decisions regarding Proposal 165.

I have been coming to Cordova and fishing the Tsiu River for 13 years spending a large sum of money in Cordova and Tsiu River Lodging and taxes, and usually spend a week in Anchorage for shopping and sightseeing .

My wife and I like to bring our children and grandkids but over the past years the tension between Commercial and Sport Fisherman on the Tsiu has increased to the point of being uncomfortable. In my 13 years of fishing the river I have never been checked for a License or seen a representative from the Alaska Fish and Game. Some years seemed to have more commercial presence with some inexperienced commercial fisherman showing disregard for the Tsiu, the wildlife and the outdoors.

I realize that many of the commercial fishermen are just trying to make a living so hopefully we can find some common ground.

Thank you for taking time to read this letter and see the sports fisherman's side and understand they create a lot of Jobs and revenue for The Tsiu River and the wonderful state of Alaska.

Sincerely,

Gary Zornes

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Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Lousie Stutes



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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I am writing this letter in hopes that something can be done about the persistent and increasing problem of the commercial harvesters interfering/endangering us sport fisherman in the Tsiu river.

My friends and I have been long time annual customers of the Alaskan Wilderness Outfitting Company on the Tsiu. We date back to the years when we lived in your "tent city" prior to the establishment of the present permanent cabins. I cannot recall one year when we did not experience unpleasant encounters with the commercial harvesters. Their nets usually (if not always) would stretch across at least 80 to 90% of the width of the river. They would run their noisy high-powered boats across our fishing lines and many times come dangerously close to many of us who were already standing in the river even though we were there first prior to their arrival. During our llast visit to the Tsiu (2014), our guide spoke to the commercial fisherman who seemed to be in charge of his group reminding him we had been fishing in this location prior to their arrival and that they were running their boat dangerously close to us, and the response our guide received was "I don't care"---as a result, we had to leave that spot and went elsewhere. I might add that the above described encounter this year was not an isolated experience but also repeated in prior years.

I find it increasingly difficult to enjoy my fishing in the Tsiu because of these repetitive unpleasant encounters with the commercial harvesters and would appreciate it if you can forward my comments and experiences to the proper authorities. It seems to me that we should be able to share the river with each other without conflict. It is my hope that I can continue to return to the Tsiu annually to fully enjoy what otherwise is a very fulfilling and enjoyable fishing experience. Anything you can do to help ensure this goal would be decisive in our returning to the Tsiu.

Sincerely,

Gilbert J. Hum

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Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Lousie Stutes



Submitted By  
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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I have been fishing the Tsiu River for a dozen years, and it seems like the conflicts with some of the commercial fishermen have become worse and worse over that time. Thus I was elated and encouraged that our annual trip to the AWO lodge would return to the good old days when you did not have to worry about someone moving in on a run to drop their nets or charge their boats through a productive spot you had been enjoying for the last hour.

You can imagine my disappointment when I learned that the board had voted to reconsider the original ruling on proposition 165 to limit commercial fishing to the lower half of the river.

If the economics of fishing have changed over the years such that sports fishing has a much bigger impact on the local economy I can't imagine that the board would make a decision that invites sports fisherman to find a different place to fish.

As you know spending a week in Alaska is an expensive proposition for those of us who travel from faraway places. My trip cost about \$5000 dollars and represents a significant expenditure that could just as well be used for a Bone fishing trip to Christmas Island or some other place in the world.

When you get upset with the rude behavior of some (not all) commercial fisherman it changes the flavor of a trip, and makes me wonder, "Why am I doing this? It makes no sense to pay to have conflicts with someone who is just trying to earn a living. Let them have it all to themselves. I can find a more enjoyable place to fish."

Thus I expect unless the fishing conditions are changed, this will be my last trip to the Tsiu, and I will go to a spot that offers a hassle-free experience.

Gordon Judd

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**RE: TSIU RIVER** March 13, 2018

Three to four of us have fished Alaska in early September from 2008 - 2014. It has been a wonderful experience until the last year. I personally spent over \$10,000 on this trip.

We had fished the Tsiu River in 2005 and had a great experience. The last trip, however, was less than anticipated. The commercial fishermen on the river created substantial problems for the sport fishermen. It was apparent they were using their boat and outboard motor to move or herd the salmon into their nets.

In so doing they had complete disregard for me and two companions who were fly fishing the northern river bank. They (the two commercial fishermen) would point their boat at full throttle directly at us and then just before reaching our location they would make a sharp turn to prevent a collision with us. We had to carefully time our casts to prevent our line from tangling with their boat and motor.

Their actions were very intimidating and dangerous. Carelessness or poor judgement in their maneuvering could have resulted in a serious accident. The wake from their boat rocked us.

It is my conviction they purposely intended to intimidate us and frighten us from fishing the river. Noise from the outboard motor spoiled the opportunity for a true Alaskan wilderness experience. There is abundant room for commercial and sport fishermen on the Tsiu, but each must respect the others rights and territory.

I am convinced those two commercial fishermen were deliberately trying to make our time on the river unpleasant and frightening-they were successful.

• Gordon Smith

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**RE: TSIU RIVER** March 13, 2018

The Tsiu River is a unique place in the world. I have been lucky enough to spend a tremendous amount of time on an in this river. This summer will be my 25th season. The Tsiu is a hidden jewel tucked away on Alaska's coast. The people who come here to relax and fish never forget it. It stays in a person's mind as the pristine Alaskan experience. What also stays in one's mind is experiencing being nearly run down by a high powered boat and run out of fishing spot by very aggressive commercial fishing boat.

I understand that the Tsiu has been managed as a commercial fishing river for a long time. The commercial fisherman have told me first hand that they have proprietary use of the river. This is "how it has always been!" has been stated to me many times. "We are just trying to make our living" has been yelled at me while a boat circled at high speed literally feet from elderly fisherman trying to keep his balance standing in the river.

I am also am trying to make my living taking fisherman on a safe experience in the Alaska wilderness. I find myself trying to explain to these visiting fishermen why these things happen. I want them to come back to Alaska for their vacation. I see anger in their eyes that things like this can happened and are not managed properly.

I am not against commercial fisherman. I am not against commercial fishing on the Tsiu. The Tsiu river is a commercial AND a sport fishing river and should have a management plan in place that takes both into account. The rivers usage has changed and should be addressed.

High speed boats on a small river where people are wading is just dangerous. I am a licensed active boat captain. This is the only body of water I know of that someone can run a fast boat full speed feet from people in the water. I do not understand why boating rules do not apply to the Tsiu. Most of these boats have no registration or any commercial numbers to identify them by. I have never seen safety equipment on board. I'm not sure why safe boating is not required on a United States navigable river.

Greg Davis

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

It has come to my attention that over the years several reasonable proposals have been submitted to your commission to strike a balance between sport fishing and commercial use of the wonderful Tsiu River.

To provide some background, the group of 4 people that I fish with have visited the Tsiu and other locations in the Cordova area since 1994 and have made in excess of 10 trips to the river in that time. My fishing experience in Alaska has mostly been focused on the Tsiu during those trips, and I consider myself a true supporter, fan, and advocate for the river. There are few places like it in my experience and I want only the best for the river, the local people, and the fish and wildlife that use the Tsiu.

During my last visit a few years ago, I was able to observe the commercial use of the river, and the takeaway from that experience was disheartening to say the least. What I saw were commercial fishermen that were solely focused on the number of fish that could be harvested with little or no regard for the fish or the sport fishermen sharing the resource. Nets were placed at various places along the river with anchors on the shore and midway across the riverbed. Then powerful jet boats would literally race up and down the river corralling the fish into the nets for maximum harvest. I do understand the concept of commercial fishing, and also realize the local fishermen need the ability to fish the river for their livelihoods. What's not understood is the care or lack thereof, at which these commercial fisherman conduct themselves on the river. Many sport fishermen were on the river at the same time, and I saw instances where jet boats had no regard for us using the river concurrently. Distance between the sport fishermen and the commercial guys was abused, and in most occasions the sport guys were forced to move away from the area. Drivers would get so close I was concerned they would damage my gear or put me in personal danger being hit by the boat or knocked over by the wake.

This is when I would expect a ranger or game and fish warden to be on site to monitor the behavior of the commercial fishermen. One time during the week I was there our guide pointed out a person that was supposedly with F&G, but I observed during no more than socializing with the commercial teams.

Additionally, the treatment of fish being harvested from the nets led me to believe there was little regard for the quality of the fish since most were thrown several feet from the water into large plastic bins. Considering the high quality of Coho meat, this seemed to be a huge waste of the species. I can't imagine the meat would be in good quality shape following that type of handling. I also observed large quantities of dead Coho lying on the shore that apparently were not successfully harvested and were left for waste.

Sport fishermen are governed by rules and regulations that Alaska expects us to follow so that future generations are allowed to enjoy the bounties of the Tsiu River. These same rules of behavior were not being followed by the scores of commercial fisherman I observed over the span of days I was trying to share the river with them.

There must be a better way for all to mutually utilize the great resources the Tsiu provides, but it is clear from my past experience that commercial fishing does not have the same level of care and concern I have for the Tsiu.

Btw, my buddies spend at least \$4000-5000 per person for a few days on the one of the greatest rivers in North America.

I trust you will serve your role well by giving strong consideration to the proposals submitted and do what is best for all parties wishing to use the Tsiu River.

Best regards

Greg Neislar

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I have been following very closely the events going on with your votes and discussion of the Tsiu River. I am a member of the Tsiu Coalition and I applaud the efforts of Dan Ernhart. It looked like I was going to be able to applaud your efforts as well until I heard of the revote! So I'm writing today to let you know that I'm very disappointed that we could have this happen. I don't want to jump on any individual but I do want to make some quick points that I would hope would have some merits and put some weight your shoulders!

I have been to Alaska 5 times, starting in 1992. Each time I have return to the same area and fished the Tsiu. I have watched with amazement how this river has changed in many, many, ways, from its flow and direction to the increase pressure of fishing on the river. Each year I come there is some kind of change. The one constant thing that doesn't seem to change is the commercial fisherman presence and their lack of respect for the river and what it provides for them! They can still have their harvest and make their money and not jeopardize the river like they currently do! They need to realize that we can all get along and enjoy the river and its resources.

The fishermen like me, that bring very good revenues to the area, are going to quit coming if something is not done! We have to put up with boats HERDING the fish into nets and while they are doing it, getting our lines cut and waves lapping up on our waders! I have seen wonton waste of fish from the commercial operations. I witnessed in 2010, their nets so close to the ocean, the fish being eaten by all the seals because the catch was left unattended for so long while they moved up the river to set out more nets!

There are plenty of fish, at least for now, for all to enjoy. The Board has a responsibility to manage this fishery in the proper way and the vote to REVOTE that just happened is NOT the proper way! I realize the economic impact that the commercial fishing industry has and it is very important for the people there. But so is the revenue that we fisherman bring to the area. But we are going to quit coming, if you continue to allow the disregard of this fishery by the current commercial operations. There are plenty of other rivers we can enjoy in Alaska. I always get asked, "Why do you keep going back to the same place, The Tsiu River?" My response is, because I know what I'm going to get and I know the fishing is outstanding and I love the people of the region! Well, I'm not sure any more, "what I'm going to get", if you guys don't do the right thing here and make the Tsiu fishable for everyone!

There needs to be restrictions put in place where we don't have to fish besides the commercial fisherman unless we want to. I don't want to travel to Alaska to watch guys driving loud Jet Prop boats up and down and around and around the river, while I'm trying to enjoy the beauty of your wonderful state and this fantastic river. I have never, and I repeat never, seen a game warden there managing the River! That is 5 times I've been there, usually the last week of August or the first week of Sept. Don't you find that strange? Don't you think we need someone watching what is going on with harvest of the river, both the commercial and the recreational fisherman?

The Tsiu is begging for your help. There is a way to make it right for everyone. It looked like you were headed in the right direction but then you changed your course! You are just going to be like the commercial fisherman in one of their "herding boats" and you are just going to circle and circle for years to come and let one of God's great gifts be ruined and wasted like so many things before, when we don't do what is right! Please reconsider your Revote and look at the facts. Please make the changes needed to preserve this gift for all, thank you for your time and service.

Sincerely,

Greg Trulock

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I have fished the Tsiu River for silver salmon four times since 2000. Notably, in 2010, relations with the commercial fishermen were relatively pleasant. In years past though it has been a different story. The commercial boats have been run close to us while we've been in the river and essentially unable to avoid them. In one instance a boat ran between me and my father, while we were but 15' apart, standing in the river fishing. I was afraid that my father was going to be run over! The river was large that year and there were many places the boat could have gone, but the operator chose to run right between the fishermen. Those of us who are wading are at a huge disadvantage in such a conflict. Wading anglers can only move slowly and cautiously, while the big metal power boats roar by, at dangerously close range.

This is a very special fishery, with an amazing return of silver salmon. Waste of the resource is terrible, yet I've seen a cart full of fish left abandoned on the sandy banks above the Tsiu. I have also seen an apparently abandoned net, with several dead salmon tangled in it.

Never have I seen a Fish and Game official on the river, checking anything. This surprises me, with so many commercial and recreational anglers using the river. In contrast, here in Washington State, I've been checked several times while fishing for steelhead and salmon.

It's an expensive proposition to fish the Tsiu for a few days. Round trip air fare to Cordova, then the flight to the lodge near the Tsiu in addition to the expense of staying in both Cordova and at the lodge itself. Deconfliction between the recreational anglers and the commercial fishermen would enhance the value of the fishery to me.

I thought that this conflict had been resolved when the board voted for Proposal 165, but have learned that it is still ongoing. It needs to be settled.

Respectfully,

Guy Miner

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**RE: TSIU RIVER** March 13, 2018

I have taken at least six prior trips to the Tsiu. I came from Philadelphia on my last fishing trip and it is a grueling series of plane rides to finally arrive at the Lodge on the Tsiu River. There is also a series of expenses involved in lodging expenses in Cordova and Anchorage. I point these items out since fishing at the Tsiu River involves sacrifice and strength to arrive there in addition to saving for the funds to pay for everything.

Most years I was exposed to the activities of the commercial fishermen in the Tsiu River. They had large nets, they had aluminum motor boats with strong Horse power motors to herd the salmon into the nets. It had a huge negative effect on my fishing experience. They drove the boats within my casting range from shore trying to herd the salmon into the nets. They moved the nets around so that we were forced to fish around their fishing territory and at times that was a chaotic situation. We worked hard to locate fishing opportunities on the river and often the salmon were a confused and skittery group.

The worst part of the experience was the large amount of noise from the motors as they ran in circles to herd the fish into the nets. How in the world can one have a positive experience with several boats running in circles and coming close to the shore where I was fishing? I would look at these fishermen at work and I felt like leaving and going home. I did not come to Alaska to see noisy boats circling the River and it influenced my decision for the following summer. I have not returned since.

At this time I am considering a return to the river for this summer, but I assure everyone that the status of the fishermen will influence my decision on returning. I have spent thousands of dollars to both catch wild salmon and to have a pleasant and enjoyable experience. That is not possible with the actions of the commercial fishermen.

I am concerned about the actions of the commercial fishermen and it will definitely influence my decision on returning for a fishing trip to the Tsiu River.

Dr. Harold Frey

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**RE: TSIU RIVER** March 13, 2018

I am a recreational angler and my friends and I have fished the Tsiu River for several years and I support the Board of Fish Proposal 165 as amended, which, in my opinion, is long overdue.

It is simply unrealistic to think that sport and commercial fishing can be safely practiced simultaneously on the same stretch of the river. Restricting commercial netting to the lower first mile of the river and reserving the upper mile or so of the river for sport angling makes perfect sense. Both lodge owners and commercial fisherman deserve to make a living and this solution does exactly that.

Sincerely,

James Conrad

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**RE: TSIU RIVER** March 13, 2018

I have fished the Tsiu River twice, once in September 2003 when there was no commercial fishing on the River. It was my first experience fly fishing for silver salmon and I had a wonderful time.

I returned to the Tsiu River in 2007 to learn that there was commercial fishing on the River. The commercial fishermen placed nets out from the bank half way across the river on alternating sides of the river. Thus most of the fish were caught by the nets. Also, the commercial fishermen used boats to herd the fish into the nets. I caught only 3 fish the whole time I was there.

A major reason to go to Alaska is to catch fish. I can fish without catching fish here in California. As long as there are commercial fishermen on the Tsiu River I will be quite reluctant to return.

Regards,

James S. Jenks

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**                      March 13, 2018

As an Alaskan resident who supports commercial fishing as well as sport fishing, I am beyond belief at the lack of consideration for sport fishing on the Tsiu River. The situation is dangerous, and the waste is terrific.

As I understand it, the Tsiu proposal was voted in and then after "new information" from Yakatat commercial fishermen has caused a special meeting to reexamine the exact same proposal.

My husband and I have been clients at a sport fishing lodge on the Tsiu for ten years straight in spite of the apparently intentional near hits by commercial boats (I can personally attest to this three times), in spite watching the huge amounts of wasted fish from commercial fishermen, in spite of the unethical fish herding practices. This is because the Tsiu sport fishing for silver salmon is the best in AK, and probably the world.

We spend over \$11,000 for a week to fish. We have brought many other clients to this lodge as well, and warn them that the Tsiu is unlike any other river in Alaska—for it is bad commercial fish practices on a river and and its small size.

We were interviewed a for a report out of Juneau about the problems on the Tsiu, and that report said that there was enough fish for everyone, but that the rules for the river must change so that behavior changes. We have seen a F & G person once in 10 weeks of fishing on the Tsiu over the years.

To me, the worst problems on the river are the unethical herding of fish and the rate of speed and closeness to sport fishers by the commercial fishing people. Clients get scared and put off and do not come back because of it. It would be so easy to change this by separating out the sport from commercial and outlawing the herding of fish. This would ease the tension on the river for all concerned, up the taxes for the Borough, take away the unethical practice and make this problem go away.

If something doesn't change, this problem will continue and grow and you will see the same proposals every three years. It can't continue status quo.

I urge you to NOT reconsider your actions for the Tsiu River.

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I have taken 11 other fishing trips in Alaska and none compare to the fishing, habitat, accommodations, guides, and the list goes on of what the Tsiu provides. Silver salmon fishing is supreme!!!

Gardner who accompanied me twice--once with my sons and one with a friend--and his sentiments are the same as mine. One comment--in the two consecutive years we went, it was much different the second year with moderate overcrowding above the marker and also the brand of commercial fishermen seemed to be more combative, all of which may have been my imaginations rather than real but Don noticed the same thing. I believe that more space should be afforded the sport users to escape the commercial practices. Please do what you can to maintain this wonderful sportfishery!

Jerry Young, MD

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**RE: TSIU RIVER** March 13, 2018

Ladies & Gentlemen,

I was very disturbed to hear about a possible reversal of a controversial board decision aimed at reducing sport-commercial conflicts on the remote Tsiu River near Yakutat. It appears to me that amended Proposal 165, to close a portion of the river to commercial fishing to provide a sport-only zone, was a very reasonable and equitable solution.

When I originally learned of its 5-2 approval I was ecstatic. However, when I later learned that the Board of Fisheries had apparently later caved to commercial fishing interest pressure (disguised a new information but really wasn't) and putting it back up for reconsideration, I was stunned. I thought that this type of exercise of raw political pressure was reserved to the lower 48 states and specifically to Chicago. To say that I'm disappointed would be a gross understatement.

I am from California I look forward to at least one or two annual trips to Alaska to fish, with my favorite destination being the Tsiu River. I typically spend around 55,000 on each of these trips and my half dozen fishing buddies do the same. I know that we're just the tip of the iceberg and if you extend that type sport fishing expenditure to multiple fishing lodges on the Tsiu River for an entire season, you're looking at several million dollars per year. It seems to me that sport fishing's economic contribution to the Tsiu River fishery shouldn't be trumped by commercial fishing. Sport fishermen don't appreciate being harassed by commercial harvesters, as they heard salmon into nets using boats. Let the commercial harvesters have their section of the river and let sport fishermen have theirs. That's the equitable solution and that's what amended Proposal 165 is all about.

In conclusion, I urge you to reconsider your actions and to approve amended Proposal 165.

Jim Conrad

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**RE: TSIU RIVER** March 13, 2018

I decided to discontinue fishing the Tsiu River a couple of years ago after several enjoyable trips.

My plan had been to pass on the wonderful experience to my sons/grandsons over the next few years and hope that fishery continued on for many more years.

The flights to/from Anchorage, Cordova, and out to the Lodge were always a highlight of the late summer/ early fall season. Extraordinary became ordinary while I enjoyed Alaskan morning light on the Tsiu and sunsets from the deck of the lodge. The fishing was always good until the jets hit the river!

Putting up with risky boat operators isn't anything new to me, and this group was as wild as I've witnessed.

I'm not a kid anymore and one of them almost picked me off one day while I scrambled away from an approaching high speed jet boat that was attempting to herd some fish into a net. The catch was primary and I was secondary in importance that day. One of my fishing acquaintances decided to hold his ground in the river and came within a hairbreadth of going home in a box! In my estimation the boat was aimed at him.

Here in Oregon we arrest people for operating boats recklessly and some of the boat operators I watched should have been arrested for endangerment and reckless boat operating. I'm surprised that we've never seen any enforcement people on the river in my years of fishing?

Joint utilization of an asset like the Tsiu Fishery is always going to be a problem due to its size. It's a pretty short river with a lot of fish moving in over a short time span. Mixing two competing uses like commercial vs. sport fisheries, in a small space and a short period of time, is a recipe for problems without strict supervision and/or division of competing uses. It's worked fairly well along the Columbia River even though no-one ever gets exactly what they consider their share.

Someone asked me what it costs to make Alaska trips and how I liked them overall and my response has been/was always short and sweet. " Start North with a few thousand dollars in your pocket and you'll have the greatest time of your life, and if you're lucky, you'll bring home the most expensive fish you'll ever eat"!

My first trip to Alaska was in 1972 and I've never stopped coming back. I've fished, hunted, and been a sightseer all these years. I've kept my own fishing boat on Price of Whales, bare boat chartered from Juneau, been to the Bering Sea, hunted the Peninsula, hunted the interior, sold boats to Alaskans, and been on floats all over the State. Alaska has always been like a second home to me and I have a lot of friends that live in Alaska.

The Tsiu was going to be my last stop after a lifetime of enjoyment in your State.

My opinion is that you should reconsider the alternatives presented vs. status quo, and attempt to either separate competing uses, or, implement a stricter control system to prevent the kind of thing that sent me packing.

Sincerely,

Jim Corwin

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I went on a weeklong trip to the Tsiu in Alaska and was really upset over the amount of commercial fishing that is going on that year. I urge anyone who has had the pleasure to enjoy this wonderful fishery to contact the Alaska Fish and Game with their comments on this issue. Maybe with enough input, they will do something about the number permits and/or area allowed for netting.

A few years ago I went on another fishing trip on the Tsiu River, located between Cordova & Yakutat. This was our sixth trip there for silver salmon, for myself & two friends. I would like to plan a fishing trip for 2018, but I am concerned due to the extensive amount of commercial netting I witnessed that year on this magnificent river. The year before there was minimal amount of netting, but this particular year it seems that the netting has doubled or more. Talking to the owner of the lodge, it is apparent that the netters are allowed twenty-four hours on and twenty-four hours off of salmon netting. This involves blocking off half of the river, in prime water, with each net. It is almost impossible for any fish to pass and spawn. We tried to go above the nets and fish for salmon, but there wasn't any in the upper reaches of the river due to the extreme salmon netting pressure. It seems that three lodges have to fish in one area above the last net. They didn't even care that we were at a certain stretch of river first, but just implemented their nets right above us and ran boats back and forth to push the salmon into the nets.

I hope the Fish and Game will not let this situation continue, as this will certainly ruin the sport fishing possibilities and future runs on this magnificent river.

I would like the Alaska Fish and Game to look into this matter and see if anything can be done about the amount of commercial netting or amount of area that will be allowed.

Thank you very much,

Jim Gregor

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

Before I started coming to the Tsiu, a group of friends and I had made over 20 annual trips to Yakutat where we fished the local rivers for silvers. We all enjoyed the fishing experience, realizing that some runs were going to be great and some down. However, we started looking for a new destination as the fishing around Yakutat deteriorated and the crowds increased. We found ourselves scheduling day trips just to get away from the commercial nets and the increasing crowds. Fortunately, a friend from my office had been traveling to the Tsiu and bringing back tales a great salmon run and wonderful accommodations at the Tsiu Lodge.

I coordinated a trip for most of my group to the Tsiu. On my first trip to the Tsiu, I was actually a little disappointed by the number of nets in the river. There seemed to be more than on the Lost river. Moreover, the commercial fisherman were even more aggressive. If we were fishing along a cut bank, they would set nets a 30-40 yards above us or below us. Periodically, they would start up their boats and race around the river, occasionally spinning their boats as they moved towards their set nets. It was clear that they were chasing fish. After waiting for a while they would then go pick the fish out of their nets. The cycle was pretty regular: 1. Set nets, wait; 2. Fire up boats and go down or upstream and race back towards the net while doing some spinning; 3. Wait for 10-15 minutes; 4. Pick fish from net. Wait for a while and start process over.

I understand from a friend who came up earlier and stayed at another lodge on the Tsiu that the same aggressive actions by the commercial fisherman were again being practiced. The noise of the boats, the obvious herding of fish, and the "this is our place" aggressive attitude of some of the commercial fisherman are putting a great sport fishery at risk. This year, it was such a joy to not to have to deal with the unnecessary conflict between sports fishermen and the commercial fishermen. I feel very fortunate that I do not have to try to make a living in the elements in which they work, but there is really no excuse for their abrasive attitude. As a group, we spend a lot of money in our efforts to find a beautiful and enjoyable environment to spend a few days each year fishing. However, the noise of the speeding boats, the obvious herding of fish and the aggressive behavior of some of the commercial fisherman will ruin both the quality of sport fishing on the Tsiu and the reputation of the Tsiu as a great place to fish with rod and reel.

Several years ago on the Setuk, I saw a confrontation between a commercial fisherman and a sports fisherman almost end in fist fight on a gravel bar. This is not a good situation when some of the participants are actually carrying firearms. There is room for both types of fisherman on the Tsiu. I encourage those who regulate commercial fishing on the Tsiu to take whatever action is necessary to control the aggressive behavior (e.g., setting nets from opposite banks in an off-setting manner to essentially block the river, racing or spinning of boats, etc.) of some commercial fisherman. The economic impact can be substantial when the sports fishing community believes that they are not a welcome part of the community. The Tsiu is a great river, but there are other places to fish in both Alaska and Canada where sports fisherman do not have deal with the stress of nets, racing motors and angry commercial fisherman setting nets around them.

Regards,

Jim Griggs

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I'm saddened by the fact that we won't be back fishing on the Tsiu since we had such a great time at the Lodge over the years. That last episode with the commercial interests on the river on our last trip caused us to re-think how important catching fish is vs. losing life/limb due to blatant attempts by high speed fish boats to "force" us off the river.

I've been in the boat business since 1967 and I understand what boat wakes and aggressive operators can do to people. Life, limb, and equipment, were put at risk by what I witnessed by some of the commercial boats on the river that year and I haven't returned as a result of those actions.

I've been visiting Alaska since 1972 and I've fished/hunted all over the state during the ensuing years. Unfortunately I won't be back. I hope the commercial and sport fish interests can co-exist in the future. It certainly doesn't look like it's happening at this juncture.

We discovered Costa Rica, since we didn't return to Alaska, and I guess that's where my tourist \$\$ will be spent in the future.

Good luck with the problem I hope it doesn't cost the loges their business!

Jim Irwin

Irwin Yacht Sales

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I've had issues with commercial fishermen on the Tsiu river..On a great day on a beautiful stretch catching silvers, a commercial boat dropped a net right in front of us & commenced to roar back & forth to drive the fish right through us into the nets..It went from a super situation of fishing , wonderfull snow covered mountains , occasionally a eagle flying by...to a loud constant roar of outboard motors & no explanation from the commercials to us, except a shrug of shoulders etc..Another time we had 5 great days to fish. But this time instead of the usual one day for commercials & one day off we were informed that the DFG were allowing four of the five days we had to commercials to make up for poor weather they had for a month or so.. We have to take the weather no matter what it may be so why the preferential treatment for commercials? It was a expensive trip to be treated so by the Alaska DFG>I had been going to the Tsiu for 6 years in a row, but that was my last..i thought the Alaska visitors travel guides were always asking what they could do to entice new travelers to visit Alaska.....Well this certainly wasn't the way I expected.. to be treated...I can spend my money in other areas & be treated much better.

Jim Mancuso

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

Our group has been fishing on the Tsiu since 2000. During most of those years, the commercial fishing industry has made our experience rather difficult. It is almost to the point where fishing the Tsiu on commercial days is an experience in being harassed.

Nets are placed right in front of the sport fishermen with us being pushed out of the way from a good fishing hole. When the nets are out, then the boats run at high speed with loud motors herding the fish into the nets. This is not the serene fishing that brings pleasure to us.

There have been times when the boats ran at high speed between us on the river where we were 20 feet apart. This included running over our lines with fish on the hook. The wake from the boats almost knocked me into the water. When the boat ran between us, the driver held his index finger aloft to salute us. There was 200 yards of water that he could have used instead of between us.

We have no way to counter the action of the commercial fishermen as we are there on a recreational trip for a few days. The expense of a trip to the Tsiu makes me wonder if I want to continue with the harassment from the commercial fishermen.

As the Tsiu is one of the few clear water streams in Alaska, I believe it should be reserved for recreational fishermen.

Jim Miner

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**RE: TSIU RIVER** March 13, 2018

I am delighted to provide my comments regarding what I see is an almost total disregard by most of the gill net fishermen of the rights of sport fishermen who are sharing the river with them. First of all I believe that there is a proper place for commercial fishing, but not in a small confined space such as the Tsiu given the manner in which such commercial fishing seems to be conducted.

I have been fishing the Tsiu for a number of years now and have been planning my trip as late in the year as I can in hopes of avoiding the gill net fishermen. The reason for this is the total disregard most of these guys have for the sports anglers.

Let me give you some examples. I have been fishing a stretch of water and have gill netters who apparently don't have boats wade through my fishing water hitting the water with oars herding the fish downstream into their net. I have had gill net fishermen in motorized dorys speed downstream through water I am fishing doing "donuts" through the hole and around their net to herd fish from the entire river into their net. I have been forced out of the area I am fishing for fear of being swamped by boats speeding in confined areas close to me.

I am responsible for bringing a number of anglers to the Tsiu. The economic impact which we have brought to the community and state is not insignificant.

If I had my preference, gill net fishing in the river should be outlawed, particularly given the shrinkage in the size of the river over the last several years. If it is not banned entirely, it should be more tightly regulated. Including the regulations which are all ready in effect currently, herding of fish should be banned entirely. A speed limit of 5 MPH maximum should be imposed on all motorized boats. Better yet, motors should be banned entirely.

The Tsiu is a precious resource. The economic benefit to the State of Alaska of this resource is not well served by its exploitation by a few commercial fishermen.

Frankly, if these conditions do not improve soon, I am no longer interested in coming to the area for my annual salmon fishing trip. I have discussed this with several of my companions who are in agreement. As a matter of fact, there are five individuals who have been with me on prior trips who are so turned off because of their confrontations with gill netters that they are unwilling to return.

Sincerely,

James A. Perry, 3385 Country Club Dr. S. Salem, OR 97302 503-930-9531 [japerry58@aol.com](mailto:japerry58@aol.com)

Cc: Gov Bill Walker Congressman Don Young Senator Gary Stevens Representative Lousie Stutes





Submitted By  
Jim White  
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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I am writing to describe my experience during a visit to the Tsiu River and offer my opinion about what should be done.

The first morning of fishing started out great, with several salmon hooked and landed within an hour. However at 9 AM the commercial salmon fishery opened and all hell broke loose. Small power boats were launched and the gill netting began. And almost as quickly the sport fishing was completely disrupted. The commercial fisherman came ashore throwing their net anchors at our feet and setting their net across the river channel directly in front of us. To add insult to injury they then motored a couple hundred yards upstream and began to run their boat in circles herding any salmon in the river downstream into their net. Needless to say this was the end of the fly fishing in this reach of the river. We moved off to a new area however the fishing, not to mention the aesthetics, throughout the portion of the river accessible to us was severely compromised for the balance of the day. Fortunately the fishery did not continue the following day but in order to avoid another confrontation with the gill netters we delayed our arrival on the river the next day, further impacting our fishing.

I can say unequivocally that this was not the angling experience I came to Alaska for. I understand that commercial fishing has an important place in Alaska history and is an important element of the economy, but what I experienced was incredibly uncivilized behavior by at least a subset of the gill netters who showed a total disregard for our interests or our safety. The commercial fishermen tried to justify their behavior by saying they had been unable to fish due to weather and had only the one day to fish, but I too had been impacted by weather and was only going to be able to fish a couple days after spending several days and many hard-earned dollars to get there. I would suggest that sport and commercial fisheries could coexist, but based on my experience in this instance with these fishermen, I have my doubts.

I believe that unless steps are taken to reduce conflicts of this nature between commercial and recreational fishermen, the very considerable economic value provided by recreational anglers to the local economy and the state of Alaska will in the long run be diminished. The incomes of lodge operators, guides, support staff, local hotels and restaurants, fish processors and others depend on visitors having a good experience when they come to your state. I strongly urge you to consider re-examining the fishery management practices in place on the Tsiu River and try to find ways in which the conflict that exists there presently can be reduced or eliminated. It is hard to imagine that with the extensive commercial salmon fisheries in your state that this gill net fishery is crucial. But if it is to continue, I believe steps are needed to modify the methods being used there, particularly the egregious and dangerous practice of herding fish with motor boats through extensive reaches of the river.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I hope to hear about changes in the management practices on the Tsiu River that will make it worthwhile to consider visiting there again.

James White

334 Rivergate Way

Sacramento, California 95831

Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Lousie Stutes



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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I am writing this letter to address the fishing situation at the Tsiu River. I have been one of the sport fishers for 12 years at the Tsiu River, which is one of the most beautiful and memorable trips I take every year. We spend seven to nine thousand dollars every year for four to six days of fishing, but it is well worth the money because of the experience of fishing there. That is not even including airfare, equipment, hotel in Cordova, etc. One of the problems that I came across is while fishing in the river was the commercial fishermen just drove close to me with his boat with no regard to my safety. He drove fast and did not care that I was standing there in the water. For me to spend that much money and to put up with the commercial fishermen takes away a lot from my trip. Also, I have never seen so many dead fish floating in the water and on the bank of the river the next day, after the commercial fishermen are there. Never once have I seen anyone regulate what is going on at the river, which I think someone should be monitoring what is happening and affecting everyone there. Please help resolve this serious problem and at least find Proposal 165 as amended to stand at your next board meeting. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Joanne Zornes

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I was greatly saddened to learn that the Alaska Board of Fisheries is revisiting its decision concerning Proposal 165 concerning the Tsiu River.

Since the early 90s, I have, with two exceptions, enjoyed sport fishing on the Tsiu River. It is a unique and beautiful river. I have also, on several occasions, shared the fishing with commercial fishermen. On some of those occasions I witnessed behavior on the part of some individual commercial fishermen that was rude, harassing, and an endangerment to sport fishermen.

I recall fishing up river from a female who was standing in the river in her waders fishing a narrow run that was filled with migrating fish. A commercial fisherman powered his boat to the water in front of her and commenced to race up and down herding the fish into his net without any regard to the safety of the female. She barely got of the water before her waders were filled with water from wave action caused by the completely uncivilized behavior of the commercial fisherman.

The fishery on the Tsiu River should be regulated for the benefit of both the sport fishermen and the commercial fishermen. However, what regulations adopted should be based on empirical evidence and not hearsay put forth by a group or groups with obvious selfish interests.

Joe Pale

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I would guess that my trouble with the commercial fish people goes back many years. They have yearly become more belligerent each year. Our trip about 6 years ago was really the worst, not only because the stormy weather prohibited many of us old gents, but we were treated to show off boatsmanship. Such as running a boat very near the bank with a one finger salute. There was nothing we could do about this unsportsman like behavior.

My long time fishing partner has gone on record as never returning to the Tsiu. I will return only if these injustices are corrected.

Thank you for allowing me to add my 2 cents.

John Anderson

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I have been getting updates on the hearings and was very disappointed to learn the Board is thinking about reversing it's earlier decision on the regulations for fishing the Tsiu River.

I first fished the river with two friends a few years ago. We are all from the Denver, Colo. Area, and two of us have been to Alaska numerous times. We were there five days fly fishing, mostly catch and release. As you would expect, we each spent \$5-6,000 on air, meals, lodging, and guides for this trip. There were plenty of salmon, but also large stretches of the river where we could not fish because commercial fisherman had set nets and were herding fish using very loud smoky boats. I thought the proposal to reserve half of the Tsiu for sport fishing was a reasonable one. The commercial catch will not be reduced in any way by this new regulation that is fair and reasonable.

I hope when you revisit the Tsiu River fishing regulation you do not overturn a long overdue, correct decision.

Very truly yours,

John Dunnewald

5764 Fig Way, Arvada, Colorado

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I have enjoyed fishing and sightseeing on the Tsiu River at many times over the past several years. My friend and I spend about 1 week every time we are there. I always enjoy the fishing, recreation and the pristine scenery.

I was dismayed and concerned when I learned of the Alaskan Board of Fisheries plan to revisit their decision on proposal 165 based on late coming and questionable information. It seems that a thoughtful and relevant discussion had taken place previously and to have that action overturned appears odd and suspicious, and raised concerns for me.

In all the time I've spent fishing and being on the Tsiu I have never seen a Fish and Game employee. In fact I was shocked when I was told there was a person stationed there full time.

I know conflicts exist between sport and commercial fishermen. I have witnessed this first hand. I don't fully understand why the commercial guys harbor such ill will toward sport, but it appears to be an ingrained attitude of prejudice perpetrated over the years. My research on the topic reveals (to no surprise) that both industries are very important to Alaska. Hand in hand goes the preservation of fisheries for neither can exist without careful attention and management by your and other organizations.

Please don't give up on the Tsiu. The past issues need to be addressed and monitored. I have heard that there has been professional mitigation attempted in the past with no resolution.

The Tsiu is such a unique and beautiful river. Steps need to be taken to preserve and protect this unique fishery. I feel strongly the Tsiu River Coalition is an evenhanded organization interested in the long-term future of the river for everyone.

Thank you for your attention to this issue.

John Goerner

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**RE: TSIU RIVER** March 13, 2018

I have been traveling to Alaska since 1971 to hunt and fish. Each year, I make several trips to Alaska, and have fished in many locations. In late August or early September, one of my favorite locations is on the Tsiu River to fish for silver salmon.

Let me first point out, that I know that the commercial fishing industry in Alaska is a very important part of their economy. I also realize that for many people, commercial fishing is their livelihood. However, there should be some limits as to what the commercial fisherman can and cannot do.

My group and I have encountered a few problems with the commercial fisherman on several occasions. Not only have we encountered the commercial fishermen cutting our lines or driving the fish away, they have also dropped their nets directly into the area of the river where we are fishing.

One year, our group, there were 7 of us, had gone out on the river early and we were fishing in a nice part of the river. At this time each of us had caught one fish, and we were hoping to catch our limit, but because of the commercial fishermen's conduct noted below we were unable to catch anymore.

After we had been there for about an hour, two commercial fishermen came by in their boat, and dropped their net into the "hole" that we were fishing. Then they circled their boat on both sides of the net and after about 20 minutes, they had taken about 200 fish out of that hole. Needless to say, our fishing was over at that time. I have seen some bad conduct by commercial fishermen in the past, but this particular instance was the most atrocious behavior by a commercial fisherman that I have encountered.

I have read the Harassment Law of the State of Alaska, and that the example I've given above, definitely falls within those parameters.

I truly believe that with more separation, both the commercial fisherman and the sport fisherman should be able to coexist.

Very Truly Yours,

John M. Jackson, Sr.

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

Out of the past 12 years I have fished the Tsiu River 11 times along with my son 4 times and a grandson 1 time. This is a total of 16 times we have fished the Tsiu at the cost of approximately \$5,000.00 per trip for each person. This includes air fare, lodging and meals in Cordova, the fee for lodging, meals and fishing on the Tsiu. The total I have spent for fishing the Tsiu including my son and grandson is approximately \$80,000.00. To me this is a large amount of money for recreation.

For this money I expect to have a good time fishing on the Tsiu. Unfortunately when the commercial fishermen are on the river it is not fun but rather a game of not being subject to harassment.

Over the years the harassment from the commercial fishermen has been from slight to extreme including :  
Running their boats at high speed between my son and I when we were less than 15 feet apart.

Placing a net between another fisherman and I when we were 10 feet apart.

Showing their middle finger at us while running the boat next to us while I am in 3 feet of water. The wake almost knocked me over.

In my opinion there should be more area that is commercial free and a fishery law person on and about the river to enforce the fishing rules and regulations both for the recreational and commercial fishers. In all the trips to the Tsiu I have never seen such a person.

Yours truly,

John Mint

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

It is with dismay that I have learned of the possible reversal of the decision to limit commercial fishing to the lower half of the Tsiu river. I have spent a great deal of money to fish the Tsiu since 1996. I have been there 6 times. During most of our visits we witnessed what I thought were uncalled actions to harass the fish with the use of boats. This activity greatly hindered the sport fishing and has had a negative effect on all the fishermen who bring a great deal of income to the state and the Yakutat region. Also in 2008, the commercial fishermen shot and killed a sow with 2 cubs only to leave the cubs to fend for themselves and it was doubtful they would make through the 1st year.

During my 6 visits, I have never once seen the Fish and Game officer who lives in the area. I wonder how violations could be witnessed if we have never seen them.

I have been considering a return to the Tsiu this year but will wait until this matter has been resolved.

Sincerely,  
John Smith

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

There was a 10 year stretch our group of 4-5 people had been coming annually to the Tsiu River to fish for silver salmon.

The presence of the commercial fishermen is becoming a greater negative as to whether we return.

The fishing nets often extend near the width of the river, the jet boats are deafening and have gone directly over my fishing line and severed it, the fish are herded out of our fishing site, and our presence is completely ignored near the point of contempt.

During our last trip there, it seemed as if the river was near completely emptied of salmon by the commercial harvesters, resulting in very poor fishing for the sportsmen.

We have all felt that this river and its salmon run have produced many positive memories. The location, scenic beauty, and the quality and class offered to us by Alaskan Wilderness are outstanding.

I think we contribute significantly to the economy and should have our presence recognized so that we do not feel harassed by these people.

I suggest that the Fish and Game force them to conform to the laws of Alaska and be restricted as to frequency of access.

John L. Sorensen

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**RE: TSIU RIVER** March 13, 2018

I have been to the Tsiu river twice, once in a rough tent fish camp and once in a beautiful cabin retreat camp. Either way, I marveled at the beauty of the area, the abundance of wildlife and the wildness of the area.

The first time I went – was about 12 years ago and the second time was about 6 years ago. The one thing that was vivid in my mind as being different was the increase of aggressive commercial fishing on the river. I have no problem with fishing, as I like the sport and I like to take home my spoils – (Fresh salmon to share with my family and friends is a great treat). What I do disagree with is the all or nothing net fishing – and if it does not meet specs – that we just discard it on the river bank. That draws the bears into the sport fishing area which is very dangerous.

This last trip, we headed out early in the morning – and we were on the river before anyone else was up. We found ourselves a little hole which was producing reasonable catch and release opportunities, when we were set upon by a powerboat. This not only disturbed the tranquil environment, but I ended up taking an unwanted bath as the wake from the boat pushed me around and I lost my footing. It also scattered the fish from the area we were working, and as the commercial crew set up on the river below us – no fish came up the river to where we were.

It is very disheartening that the commercial fishermen have such wanton attitudes toward fishing and to others on the river – I have seen the nets strung across “no more than half the river” that take up the deep side of the river where the fish travel and all that is left unnetted is the wet sand bar as the tide travels out. Like the fish are gonna travel across dry land to get up stream??

I respectfully request that you DO NOT reconsider your position on Proposal 165 as amended. There will still be plenty of opportunity for the commercial fisherman to net the river without interference from the little guy.

Leave some of the wilderness and wildness to those of us that appreciate it, and travel great distances to enjoy it.

Truly Yours

Karen Alger

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**RE: TSIU RIVER** March 13, 2018

I want to comment on my sport fishing experience on the Tsiu. I have lived in Alaska 34 years, and I have fished all over the Alaska Peninsula at various lodges and at the Tsiu for 10 years (one full week each time).

In all my experience of sport fishing in Alaska, I have never seen anything like the experience on the Tsiu. First, the silver salmon experience is by far the best fishing I have ever had. I love it. Secondly, the commercial fishing on the river is like I have ever experienced anywhere in Alaska. It is hard to believe that our state fishing regulations allow what happens on this incredible river.

The Tsiu is a short, extremely shallow, narrow river. I cannot believe that commercial fishing is allowed on this river because of its shallowness and importance to overall silver salmon health.

However, it is currently allowed, but the commercial fishermen abuse the privilege by:

1. Netting completely across the river--on a daily basis from my experience
2. Driving boats with large, large horsepower to herd fish above and below the nets into the nets.
3. Coming within yards of sport fishermen as they fish in the water. One year, a commercial fisherman came within yards of me at a FULL tilt while I am fishing in the water. Another woman at the lodge was also scared by a commercial fisherman coming fast within yards of her. She was terrified. I personally have been soaked with a wake from a boat while I was fishing.

I am concerned, not only for the sportfishing industry on this river, but most of all for the salmon. The Tsiu is shallow and small. The fish don't have anywhere to go when herded and when scared by the huge motors. The motors dig up the sand and change the flow of the river. This is abuse and poor conservation of the resource.

I believe that the Board of Fisheries needs to take a long, hard look at the way this river is currently managed and the abuse of regulations that take place. It needs to change--not just for the sport fishermen--but for the long term conservation of the resource.

Commercial fishing on this river needs to be phased out, but in the meantime, much more heavily regulated and monitored.

Kate Sandberg

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

My family and I were pleased with the initial decision of the Fish Board on their decisions for the Tsiu River followed by disappointment of a possible reversal. My family, and friends of the family have been coming up to the Tsiu to fish with the Alaska Wilderness Outfitting service since they initially built the lodge. We look forward to this trip every few years when we can save enough pennies to do it. AS a family, we spend well over \$10,000/trip for the privilege of sport fishing for salmon. I would like to address a few issues which, as I understand the situation, were used as reasoning to hold a special meeting.

1. There has indeed been several encounters with the commercial salmon harvesters which included nets being stretched out where we, and other sport fishermen had been casting lures from the bank. This act was further aggravating by the boats herding the salmon into their nets while continuously running in front the bank fishermen with the noisy boats and preventing safe casts from the bank. The area of the river covered by each net was questionable in my mind.

2. If there is a Fish and Game employee patrolling the area, we never saw one at any time that we have been on the Tsiu.

3. The commercial fishery is not closed down. But will have the same flexibility to open area as in the past.

These are the main issues that seem to have been disputed, and were used to readdress the original decision. It is also my understanding that mitigation by a conflict resolution team was unsuccessful. It is hoped that a resolution of some sort can be reached. We were planning, and looking forward to a trip this year, to include my grandson. That trip is presently "on hold".

Sincerely

Ken Malic

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I have been to the Cordova and Tsiu River area two times since 2008. There was definitely a conflict between the boats and the wade fishermen on my trips. At 9am Wed morning I was fly fishing the Tsiu and this commercial fishing boat pulled right in front of me, hooked up his net and started doing doughnuts with his boat chasing the fish into the net. If I had not moved I would have been run over. While I was there for a week, I never saw a Fish and Game Employee and never had my license checked. We have not been back because of the commercial fishing/ boat issue. My dad wanted no part of the conflict with the boats!

I was excited to hear about the compromise to section off parts of the Tsiu to allow for recreational fishing and commercial fishing but then disappointed to hear that some board members changed their votes and it looks as though nothing will be changing at the Tsiu.

I spent close to \$8000 on my 2 trips to Alaska. I do look forward to coming back to bring my kids to share the Alaska outdoors. However, I doubt I will put them in the same position I experienced with the commercial fisherman on the Tsiu.

Kevin McConnell

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**RE: TSIU RIVER** March 13, 2018

I come from a family of fishermen, consisting of generations of commercial fishermen peppered with others whom have guide services for sport fishing on Lake Erie. As you can imagine, family gatherings are an intricate balance of joyous celebration and impassioned debates of each group's perspectives. It is a historic competition for fishing rites that is not defined by: a time period, economic status, or geographic location.

Fisheries can appear to be healthy and self-sustaining, yet the ebb and flow of nature can be destroyed in an instant. The imbalance that man tends to create is the reason these agencies exist, so as to provide state and federal guidelines to protect fisheries for future generations. Many states investigate, document, and revise the laws as well as possession limits for both commercial and sport fishing annually. Thereby, providing resources for all user groups, as well as maintaining the balance of each fishery. At this time the Tsiu River fishery seems to be a location where concern is paramount.

The situation occurring on the Tsiu River seemed quite different from other places I have fished. I am quite fortunate to say that I have fished many locations: all the Great Lakes, fly-ins in Canada, Mexico, Aruba, Jamaica and many locations in Alaska. It is Alaska's beauty and diversity which brings me back frequently. However, the recent fishing tactics noted on the Tsiu River have me considering spending my vacation monies in some other state. I was appalled by tactics employed by the commercial fisherman on the Tsiu. More difficult for me to grasp was the seeming lack of supervision or monitoring of the abuses that were taking place.

I think the contrast between the regulations I am used to in Ohio versus Alaska may have been the reason my sensibilities were insulted. The Ohio fisheries on Lake Erie are under supervision daily during the summer months. In fact, Wildlife officials from southern counties are temporarily relocated during the summer months to ensure adequate coverage of Lake Erie's fisherman, commercial and sport. It is just a daily happening. Perhaps that is why the abuses I witnessed and heard about enraged me. I stood in shame to admit that I was from a family of commercial fishermen.

The guide staff of my outfitting company attempted to downplay the situation and act as professional as possible to ensure my safety. I assure you that I felt safer fishing among grizzly bears feeding on salmon than I did standing on the bank of the river in the presence of those commercial fisherman. Those men felt free to blatantly violate the laws of the state, as well as, plunder the balance of nature by overfishing the river, and the killing of wildlife.

Again, not to fault my outfitters, but I did not feel safe when a power boat went shooting down the center of the river while I was standing on the sandy bank with my line in the water. Nor did it seem ecologically plausible when nets were placed across the entire river to collect the fish during their river run. Those men seemed to be trying to prove a point, that they had more of a right to claim the salmon than did any other person or entity. I viewed their actions as an obvious disregard for the future of commercial fishermen.

After what I witnessed, I feel the State of Alaska needs to work harder at investigating how other states or federal agencies work to enforce and manage the laws that were created to regulate this balance. Please invest some of your energies into protecting the Tsiu River.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. I hope that my words will assist you in taking action about the abuses occurring on the Tsiu River.

Respectfully Yours,  
Kristen Quisno-Witt

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**RE: TSIU RIVER** March 13, 2018

A few years ago my father and I booked a fly-out fishing trip with Wilderness Outfitters, out of Cordova. I was aware that there was commercial fishing being done on the river before I booked the trip. The problem was we were told that they were not allowed to fish every day. I was led to believe that at least 2 or 3 days of our 5 day trip would be without them netting the fish. This was not the fact. They fished the river all 5 days of our stay, and on all 5 days they used a jet boat to herd the fish toward their nets. This was often done right thru the holes where we were fishing. Some of the times they would slow down, when going by, but not always. Several times they came way too close for comfort. It finally got so bad we would get out of the water when we heard them coming. We learned that this was their last week on the river as the run had slowed down and they were trying to get as many fish as possible. The DC-3 was landing and taking off all the time. Apparently there is no one out there on the river to make sure they follow the rules, if there are any rules. I have learned that there is supposed to be someone out there that wears a badge, and enforces the law, but they were in stealth mode all five days we were there, because we never saw them.

This trip booked for \$ 3,500.00 per person and there were 4 of us. That is \$ 14,000.00 and does include the air fare, or 3 nights in Cordova staying with Steve at Orca Adventure. So the grand total is over \$ 20,000.00 dollars. A lot to pay for a fishing trip that was in part ruined by rude commercial fishermen. If we would have had a couple of days on the river without them herding the fish it would have been better, or if there had been some part of the river where they were not allowed. It would be much better if they had a section of the river where they set their nets that did not interfere with sport fishermen. I would think that the upper half of the river would be a section where they would not want to set their nets as that is probably where more older fish are hanging out. This did not seem to be the case. They had their nets all up and down the river. And this caused a lot of fish to be discarded from their nets when they pulled them. These fish could be seen floating down the river. Not only did they not get harvested by the commercial fishermen, they didn't get caught by sport fishermen either and worse of all they didn't get a chance to spawn out. Would I book another trip to the Tsiu, Definitely not, would I recommend it to other fishermen, NO If things were changed, probably yes. Because of the great guides at the lodge, fantastic food and lodging it was a good trip. Fantastic trip NO. could have been with just a few changes put in force on the river. Hope this can be done.

LeAnne Reinsch  
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Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Lousie Stutes



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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I have written you before as I and my wife have fly fished the Tsiu for about 17 years every September and a I have fished there before the Alaska Wilderness Lodge was built about 5 times, in tent camps. I am 77 years old and my wife is 70. We wade for the Coho with fly rods and release most of our fish, keeping some for shipment back to Minneapolis where we enjoy the salmon meals very much. It seems to me that since lodges are now licensed on the river, that accommodations must be made to the sport fishing activity different than when there were no lodges there.

I understand there is an attempt for a reconsideration of your decision, recently made, to enlarge the area designated for the sport fishermen. As far as a reconsideration is concerned, I understand the same arguments made originally to you are merely being repeated and no new evidence is being put forward. The record was complete when you made your well reasoned decision. I oppose any reconsideration of your decision.

In my previous letter to you, prior to your decision, I urged you to consider the danger of having the commercial fishing boats in close proximity to the wading sport fisherman. I personally have been threatened by the commercial fishermen bringing their boats so close to where I am standing in the river, in the sand, that I have felt for my safety. There is no doubt this was done intentionally by the boater to scare me. Someday there is going to be a serious accident in the river since the commercial fishermen apparently feel the nonresident fly fisherman is an interloper. The commercial fisherman and the sport fisherman should each have their designated portion of the river in which to fish, so they are not fishing together. I have never observed any sport fishing from a boat in the river. Wading in the river is the only method I have seen.

Economically, I understand that the licenses paid by the fishing lodges on the Tsiu are fairly steep and the money goes to benefit the Yakutat area. The Yakutat taxes we pay to occupy a room in the Lodge is a substantial benefit to the people of Yakutat and we ponder whether those taxes paid by both the Lodge and by the customers do not confer a benefit to the community greater than any profits made by the commercial fishing enterprise. I have watched the netting procedures and the volume of fish taken and I am left to wonder how that volume when transported by planes to the canneries or other commercial facilities can make the whole commercial enterprise worthwhile. Hopefully the revenue taken in by the sport fishing lodges helps Yakutat to realize the full benefit that can come from this wonderful river.

Sincerely,

Leland J. Frankman

555 Oak Ridge Place

Unit 130 Hopkins, MN. 55305

952 378 1132

Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Lousie Stutes



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**RE: TSIU RIVER** March 13, 2018

I am an attorney in Minneapolis, Minnesota, 71 years of age, and I have fished in numerous rivers in Alaska over the past 35 years.

I have been fishing the Tsiu River for silver salmon (Coho) with a fly rod (mostly catch and release) since the early 1980's. Alaska Wilderness Outfitters just had a tent camp near the mouth of the River during my first couple years fishing there. I have been at the new lodge with my wife in September for the past dozen years fishing for silver salmon. The fishing has been excellent, except when the commercial fishermen are there trying to scare and run over the fishermen who are wading in the river.

Reading over the summary of the testimony by the Yakutat fisherman used for the basis for the Board's decision, I must say that I do not recognize the case at all. To say there is no conflict between the commercial fisherman and the sport fisherman is totally opposite to my own experiences on the river and, I am sure, totally contrary to all the evidence you have obtained from other sources. In fact, a couple years ago, I met two State troopers coming off the plane at the lodge who were traveling incognito for purposes of responding to the many complaints lodged by fishermen regarding the dangerous activity by the commercial fishermen. They must have been there for a reason.

These commercial fisherman go out of their way to not only show their contempt for the rest of us, they are using their boats to purposely endanger the wading fishermen by coming as close as they can in their speeding boats to the fishermen so as to inspire fright and drive the fishermen back on shore, out of danger. I have been very afraid from my wife and my own safety on many occasions. In short, somebody is going to get injured or killed by one of these boats, and then the Board will finally believe what you have been telling them.

My wife and I spend about \$10,000 every September coming to the Tsiu and staying at the Alaska Wilderness Lodge. That includes two nights at the Reluctant Fisherman Hotel in Cordova, going and coming, We have been spending one or two nights in Anchorage as well on the trip and that is extra. The Tsiu is a perfect river for wading, not too deep, and a sandy bottom with not many rocks. There is another lodge on the river as well, and the return to the lodges and thus tax revenue to the state must be substantial.

I have observed the catches the commercial fishermen make on the river, and I cannot believe it is a worthwhile activity on an economic basis considering they fly in and out to fish the river from Yakutat. The price they get for the fish is not very rewarding, so I understand. Speaking of Yakutat, in the 1970's I fished the Situk River for cohos, and I understand the fishing there is no longer the great fishing it used to be. I do not know the cause of that, but I fervently hope that the nets put across the Tsiu do not destroy the returning spawning fish stocks, so that the Tsiu will no longer be the great sport fishery I have experienced.

Very Truly yours,

Leland J. Frankman

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Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Lousie Stutes



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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I have fished on the Tsiu annually for the past 11 years. In light of current discussions about river use perhaps some information about my experiences would be helpful,

Being on the Tsiu is so good (fishing, scenery, accommodations) that I have been willing to spend approximately \$700 a day to be there for 5 days, each year, for 15 years

Noise and competing with netters for fishing locations can make for a bad experience.

In areas where river depth varies from deep runs to a few inches, legally set nets can essentially block upstream fish migration owing to the shallow water beyond the nets. Equally ugly is being buzzed by high speed jet boat as netters go up and down stream, looking for places to set nets, often within casting distance of fishermen. Also it is most disturbing to see or hear boats herding fish into nets. Finally, once the fish are netted I have seen fish that are too red and unacceptable for the cannery may be improperly disposed of (this was especially recently when river levels were very low).

In my fifteen years (75 fishing days) I have never seen or spoken with a Fish and Game employee. I fail to see how regulations are properly enforced.

Linda Ott

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PS

I understand there has been a comprehensive study that compares the economic impact of sport fishing and commercial fishing. That should be looked at very closely.

Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Lousie Stutes



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## RE:TSIU RIVER

I am writing to express my extreme opposition to Proposal 165. Sportsman fishing is a backbone of the Alaskan culture and brings significant economic benefits to the area. Sportsmen are drawn to a taste of wilderness, the experience the untamed natural beauty and world class fishing. While I understand the purpose of commercial harvesting; you must at the same time, maintain the integrity of the Alaskan experience and safeguard a healthy salmon population. I have been a yearly visitor to the Tsiu River for the past 3 years. I have seen first-hand the perils to nature and disregard to the sportsman's experience from commercial harvesting; even with the ½ mile reservation for sportsmen fishing. It is my firm belief that any further impingement on sportsman's fishing will not only violate the integrity of the experience but also potentially jeopardize the wading sports fishermen by forcing them into the commercial zone. The closed area to commercial fishermen should remain at the historical level of a minimum ½ mile to 1 ½ miles.

Thanks,

Lisa Honer

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**RE: TSIU RIVER** March 13, 2018

I have been fishing and hunting in Alaska since 1971. Most years I make 2-3 trips to Alaska and have fished in many locations. One of my favorite locations is the Tsiu River for silver salmon in late August or the early part of September.

On a number of occasions we have had "problems" with commercial fisherman cutting our lines, driving the fish away, or, in some instances, putting their nets directly into the area of the river where we are fishing.

There were seven of us in our group, we went out to the river early and were fishing in a very nice part of the river opposite of where the commercial fisherman fly their fish out to Yakutat. We had been there for about an hour when two commercial fisherman came by in their boat and after a moment came back and placed their net directly in front of us in the "hole" that we were fishing. At that time we had caught at least one fish per person and were hoping to get additional fish for our limit but that ended right there.

The commercial fisherman then circled their boat on both sides of the net and within about 20 minutes took at least 200 fish out of that hole and our fishing was over.

It is about the most blatant and egregious conduct by a commercial fisherman that I've seen although I have seen some that were almost as bad.

I know that the commercial fishing industry in Alaska is a very important part of their economy and I realize that many fisherman need to do commercial fishing for a livelihood. However, there should be limits as to what they can and cannot do.

I have read the "Harassment Law" of the State of Alaska and this last example certainly falls within those parameters.

It is my hope that a more aggressive enforcement of existing laws should enable both the commercial fisherman and the sport fisherman to coexist.

Very truly yours,

Louis A. DeMers

725 UNIVERSITY AVENUESACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95825 (916) 929-9680

Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Lousie Stutes



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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I have fished the Tsiu about 6 times. A few years ago I decided not to return because of the hassle of dealing with the commercial fisherman on the river. I had a commercial fisherman run his boat at me in an attempt to chase me off the river. He came by while I was standing on a sandbar in the river and ran his boat at high speed within 2 feet of me. He had lots of open water available and it was purely an attempt to drive my group off the river. I will likely not return to the river while commercial fisherman are present. Dealing with them has ruined entire trips. I have no interest in paying thousands of dollars to fish in Alaska only to have commercial fisherman run their boats back and forth in front of me trying to chase the fish down river into a net while I try to fly fish. I don't want to pay to spend a week at the lodge if I can really only fish every other day. If this situation changes, give me a call and I will come back.

**Louis A. Ferreira**

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Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Lousie Stutes



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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I cannot believe the board is thinking about overturning their decision. I'm sure outside pressure was the cause, and NOT additional late information as they stated.

This is a great disappointment for me and my colleagues. We have fished the Tsiu for many years now and every year we see many breaches of the regulations. We have confronted the Female Fishery Inspector and pointed out several serious incidents some possibly fatal. I personally have been knocked over by waves caused by the boats herding fish, in one instance I lost a fly line and almost a \$750 rod caught in the propeller of the boat. Unfortunately they drive the boats like mad men with NO consideration for others on the river. One day there WILL be a fatality what will the Board say then.....Too late to say sorry!

We have also witnessed many times hundreds of Salmon dumped and left for the bears and birds to clean up. Somewhere in my files I may have photos to show this.

Lastly, I think it is important for the Board to realize the financial benefit the sports fishermen bring to the area. Anchorage, Cordova, etc. My husband and I spend about \$20,000 in total for our 10 day trip, so in ten years we must be getting close to \$150,000 !

I agree the River should be harvested for commercial reasons but there must be safe accommodation for the sport fishermen. We must co-exist in harmony.

Best wishes and good luck.

Marlene Smith  
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Wild Wind Farm  
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Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Lousie Stutes





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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I have been following and listening in to the boards discussions on the Tsiu River proposals. One concern of mine is the many letters written about the conflict between the commercial fishing boats and the sport fishermen standing in the river, but there is no report of it by the full time fish and game employees over the years. I could understand if it was a one time incident that it would be missed. But the letters are from many different people fishing at many different times of the season over several years. (I have seen and read some of the letters myself) Another concern is the waste of the blush fish thrown up on shore. Again the full time fish and game employee has not seen it. I think that person needs to be questioned as to where and how his/her time was spent. How could so many other people experience the conflict and see the wasted fish, but not the fish and game person.

Dan Ernhart is my son and the manager of his company's lodge on the Tsiu River. He is passionate about his concerns for his customers and also the river itself. ( and I, as well, am concerned about his safety) That is why he started this coalition, trying to get peace and order accomplished through the proper channels. I think you will find if you look at all of his proposals that his intensions were never to stop the commercial fishing, but find a way for all to peacefully enjoy the river. Hopefully you will decide to look further into this conflict that is impairing the quality of experience that both parties should be able to enjoy. Not to mention also before someone gets hurt.

Thank you for reading my concerns....

Marlys Ernhart

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I am a sport fisherman that comes to Alaska every fall with my son, and two other friends. We have done this for the past twelve years. The first year we had two days with no commercial fisherman on the river and had a great time and caught lots of fish. On the day the commercial guys showed up it all changed. With no words exchanged they started dragging a net across the area we were fishing in. All we ask is that a little common courtesy be displayed. After that we had two fish on when they started the herding of fish into the net. It really did take away from the Alaska experience.

We have kept coming back thinking that something will change. Last year it did, the good news was some of the commercial guys in boats would slow down when they went over our lines.

In my opinion to keep this fishery alive and well for the sportsman there has to be some middle ground. I'm convinced that Alaska does not want to lose the dollars that sportsman bring into the state every year. To use vacation time to fish a river like the Tsiu is a dream come true to most sport fishermen. But on days when commercial fishermen are on the river it can easily turn into a nightmare.

Don't ruin something that can be so good for so many.

Sincerely,

Art Morrison

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I am a guide on the Tsiu River. I have seen years of commercial fishing and sports fishing going on side by side. The Tsiu is a short, shallow and narrow river. When the peak of fishing is underway the river becomes quite crowded. Every year the crowds seem to grow. With all the people standing in the river commercial and sports fishing the use of high-speed boats has become dangerous.

Because the Tsiu is a shallow river a flat bottom boat require a lot of speed to keep from dragging the bottom. Boats running up and down the river weaving through people is asking for an accident. The boats must follow the channel, fisherman fish the channel, not much room for error. I have witnessed numerous close calls. Once an angler actually have to dive out of the way to avoid being run over by a boat sliding out of control around a corner!

There is very little respects given to the angler visiting Alaska's Tsiu River by the commercial fishing boats. It is bad enough that angles are run out of fishing holes by nets laid at their feet. It is just not safe or fair to run the angles off the river with a boat run in circle at high speeds in front of them. People come to Alaska for a special fishing experience, not to be run off the river by dangers that could be regulated. Let me know if I can assist in making the Tsiu a safer place to experience.

Captain Matt Williams

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Savanna, GA

Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Lousie Stutes



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**RE: TSIU RIVER** March 13, 2018

I am writing on behalf of myself, and my father Michael Withey, to voice our disappointment in the Alaska Board of Fisheries. The decision to vote in favor of possible reconsideration of Proposition 165 as amended was indeed disappointing, but equally disappointing was the manner in which the process was conducted and the decision reached.

I live and work in Chicago, Illinois. My father still resides where I grew up—Phoenix, Arizona. It is only once a year that my father and I are able to escape to the wilderness together to obtain our annual fly-fishing fix. The trip from the lower 48 up to the Tsiu certainly isn't easy, and it certainly isn't cheap, but is well worth it for the one-of-a-kind sport-fishing experience the Tsiu can provide. Sadly, the last time we visited the Tsiu, our experience was disappointing and heartbreaking. The complete lack of enforcement from the fish and game department (I never once saw the fish and game employee supposedly stationed on the river) has continually allowed commercial fishermen to exploit the river, destroying the sport-fishing experience. On more than one occasion during my trip, I was standing in the middle of the Tsiu, trying to enjoy the solidarity and serenity of the fly-fishing experience, only to have the deafening roar of a power boat come life just below me, and proceed to jet across the river in methodical bursts and zig zags, herding schools of fish away from the narrow open channel and into the expanse of commercial netting stretching across 75% of the river's width.

I am frustrated in the Alaska Board of Fisheries' decision on Proposition 165, but I am even more disappointed to learn that the Board initially voted in favor of the proposal, and then voted to reconsider the decision after receiving un-vetted emotional complaints after-the-fact. Certain members of this coalition (namely Dan Ernhart) have spent a tremendous amount of time and effort properly navigating the legal system in an effort to protect a truly great salmon fishery. It's unfortunate to have those efforts nullified by complaints outside of the appropriate judicial setting.

I urge the Board to not reconsider its decision on Proposition 165. I also urge the Board to take the time to digest all the information, and focus not on the parties' emotions, but on the facts and what is best for the river and its users.

Sincerely,

Matt Withey

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Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Lousie Stutes



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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

My name is Maurice Bransfield and I live in Anchorage. I have been following the boards review of the proposal concerning commercial fishing (ways and means) and sport fishing for Silver Salmon on the Tsiu River. I have fly fished the Tsiu for years and spent thousands of dollars to fish this small but wonderful fishery for Silver Salmon. But, every year when I make my plans to fish where and when, there is one thought that always affects my decision to spend my hard earned money to fish the Tsiu and that is will there be commercial fishing at the same time. This is no small matter since I'll be spending thousands of dollars to fish a few days and live in fear that a boat with a large net will literally force me out of a fishing spot favorable to casting a fly for a chance to catch a silver, this is totally unacceptable and has a huge negative impact on the total fishery.

The last time I fished the Tsiu it was the worst experience of my life. I was fly fishing for silver's in a small pool and having some success when a commercial fishing boat came right at me at a high rate of speed, running the boat onto the beach, forcing me to run in fear of being hit and thrown into the water. In a most crude and cavalier manner, they set up their nets right in the very spot I was fishing. I asked them what was going on and they said we can fish any where and time they wanted. They didn't care a nickel that I was there first and simply fly fishing this one small spot on the river. They proceed to set up their nets and kill fish. They actually ran one of their boats above the nets in a wild and zig zag manner to harass and drive salmon back down river into their nets. If I harassed fish like they did I would be arrested and for good reason but not them....hum ! The worst part was that many of the fish were floating dead down river, what a waste ! Plus, they didn't care and had an attitude of get lost we own this river. One of them actually told me if I didn't like it to write my congressmen, kind of strange statement. They proceeded to do the same thing up and down the river. Taking fish and letting them sit in the sun, killing fish that got away from their nets, and in total disregard for sport fishermen or any authority.

Please do not reconsider proposal 165 as amended to correct this horrific condition that exist on Alaska's best Silver Salmon fishery. Thanks for doing the just and honorable thing.

Sincerely,

Maurice Bransfield

Anchorage, Alaska [maury@gci.net](mailto:maury@gci.net)

Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Lousie Stutes



Submitted By  
Michael Thelander  
Submitted On  
4/10/2018 5:05:54 AM  
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**RE: TSIU RIVER** March 13, 2018

I have been fly fishing on the Tsiu River several times over the last decade. When I am able to go I always stay at the Tsiu River Lodge. During my last trip we also stayed for three days/nights in Cordova where we rented a car, stayed at a couple of local hotels for three nights, plus dined in the restaurants. In total, I spent around \$5,300 - \$5,500, not counting the airfare to and from Cordova (don't tell my wife). My friend spent a similar amount.

Although the Tsiu River is 2nd to none when it comes to silver salmon, I am also well-familiar with the unique hazards that the river presents. Specifically, I've dealt with motorized boats passing at high speeds within a very short cast as the commercial fishermen round up their easy catch by chasing the salmon into their nets which stretch across virtually the entire river and which are sometimes left out overnight.

The challenge isn't so much figuring out where the fish are but where the commercial fishermen won't be since inevitably all sport fishermen find that they have to move from their spot to make way for the netters. In one well-known incident from the lodge, one of the commercial fishermen spent the season specifically targeting one of the guides by always dropping his nets where the guide was fishing with his guests. It has gotten to the point where I try to come late enough in the season that I know the commercial fishermen are long gone, but unfortunately I can't always plan my trip accordingly – as was the case this last year.

I've read that there is a Fish and Game employee that spends their full time on the river making sure that the regulations are obeyed. While I can't completely rule out their presence, I've never seen them in all my years of fishing the Tsiu nor have I heard any of the guides or guests mention that there is a "neutral authority figure" monitoring the situation. They have mentioned that on occasion a Fish and Game employee might land to check a few licenses before heading off, but in all of my days fishing on the river I have never even seen this happen. I've also never heard anyone mention that they were checked so if this spot checking is occurring it is few and far between and by no means effective when it comes to regulating the illegal and legal activities that take place on the river.

Given that the Tsiu River is a treasure, I sincerely hope that you implement and enforce policies on the river that are fair and equitable to both the sport and commercial fishermen. As it stands now, this situation does not exist.

Sincerely,

Michael Thelander  
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Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Louie Stutes



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## RE:TSIU RIVER

To Whom It May Concern:

I have been fly fishing on the Tsiu for about the last fifteen years. With family and work, I don't make it every year, but I've been there about six times, spending up to a week each time that I come. Each trip brings in several thousand dollars to the local community, including hotel and meals in Cordova, as well as fees to stay at the lodge (Alaska Wilderness Outfitting Company)

The Tsiu is a treasure for anyone that loves sport fishing and a day spent on the river makes up for all the times I don't catch a fish when fishing somewhere else. I understand the need to balance the needs of sport fishermen and commercial fishermen, but after spending several weeks in total on the river over the last decade, I also know the two entities can't reasonably fish in close proximity to each other, let alone on the same stretch of water.

The motorboats used by the commercial fishermen to herd the fish into the nets represent a great hazard to anyone standing in the water. I've seen boats "buzz" fishermen, sometimes passing in between a group of men/women fishing. We (sport fishermen) want to fish where the fish are congregating and they (the commercial fishermen) want to draw out those fish and chase them into their nets. At a minimum, the commercial fishermen turn a tranquil day into a somewhat stressful day since I never know when a boat will keep moving closer and closer to me until I'm forced to go somewhere else. Given the remote location of the Tsiu, it isn't reasonable to expect everyone to play fair and unfortunately us sport fishermen have a distinct disadvantage

- we use fly rods instead of nets and we navigate the water in our waders instead of in a motorized boat.

The only viable option is to mandate fishing zones that are restricted to each party with a measurable distance in between each zone to protect both parties' interests. I understand there is a proposal to reduce the distance to only 1/4 mile instead of a 1/2 mile. The latter distance, if not larger, is much better to preserve the tranquility of fishing on the Tsiu without fearing life and limb or a busted rod and lost line.

At the same time, the commercial fishermen will have ample stretches of the river to meet their quotas.

Sincerely,

Mike Thelander

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Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Lousie Stutes



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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I would like to address the issue of the commercial fishermen and their total disregard for the rules and regulations of their occupation! Not to mention the downright rude and unethical treatment of the sport anglers!

I am afforded the luxury of taking a fishing trip with my father and husband once a year. We have chosen the Tsiu as our destination 5 times. (My dad has been there 7 years).

Scenario:

I am standing in the river, attempting to learn how to fly fish, it is quiet and serene (except for the occasional YAHOOOOO Fish ON"), and then all hell breaks loose. Here comes these deafening boats, roaring up the river, (in an area I did not think boats could get) knocking me over in the water, and then literally dropping their nets at my feet! I was scared and in shock, to think that something like this could happen. My guide came to my rescue. She asked the boat operators what they were doing. They replied with obscenities told us to go @\*@@+\*@# ourselves and threatened bodily harm. By this time my husband, father, and friend recovered from the shock and wanted to get involved. We wanted to get all the info on these bullies, so we could talk to their boss, but there was no way to identify these people. No id numbers on the boats or vehicles. Our guide told us they were commercial fishermen and suggested we report it to the warden. I did. I never received any reply.

It is my understanding that there are rules and regulations for the commercial fisherman. I do not believe they abide by any of them!

Nets were stretched completely across the river; boats were hazing the fish into the nets and dead fish being thrown back into the water. I was appalled to see this very disgusting behavior. I am sure the department of fish and wildlife will be interested to see exactly what is going on. These men are dangerous. We were harassed by these bullies, were blatantly threatened and do not feel safe to fish while they are on the river. I cannot believe this type of barbaric behavior is allowed.

We had a friend with us that was so traumatized by this, he refuses to ever come back. We will be giving it second thoughts also. We come to enjoy the wilderness and all it has to offer. We did not pay all that money to be in the middle of a war zone!

I know they need to make a living also, but do it honestly. There is no need for this type of utter disrespect to the sport angler. That river is big enough for everyone.

I am asking that you send someone out to watch exactly what happens.

At least make them follow the law!

Sincerely

Mickie Maxson-Box                      522 Last Chance Road

Walla Walla, WA. 99362

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Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young              Senator Gary Stevens              Representative Lousie Stutes





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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

Our group did not return to the Tsiu River this past fall to fish. We fished on the Tsiu from 2001 – 2014 for 13 straight years.

On many trips the river had a commercial fishing operation on it. The commercials were basically fishing where the sportsman had access. They were running boats at high speed up and down the river and caused an unsafe situation. As you know the river is not big. Sportsman need to be able to wade the river in order to have casting and catching opportunities. The commercial boats on a small river not only spook all the fish, but are obviously antagonistic towards sports fisherman, leading to close encounters that will ultimately result in incidents of personal injury or worse.

Frankly, I am dismayed that the State of Alaska allows this kind of situation to go unchecked or unsupervised.

Needless to say many of our trip experiences soured the Tsiu for us and we will not come back until this situation is resolved.

Thanks,

Tom Mike Anderson, CPA  
888 SW Fifth Ave., Ste 800  
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Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Lousie Stutes



Submitted By  
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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

My name is Michael Loudon and I am an Oral and Maxillofacial surgeon practicing in Battle Creek, Michigan. I have followed Proposal 165 with interest as I have fished on the Tsiu River several times. I have recently stopped going to Alaska to salmon fish due to the antagonistic behavior of the commercial fishermen on the Tsiu as they used their boats to drive the fish both up river and down river into their nets. I have even had a fish that I was fighting cut off by them with their boat when I had the catch within 90 feet of the shore. I have seen them place their nets across the only channel deep enough for the fish to move up river and thereby allow no escapement of fish for us to catch. I have also seen the wastage of their salmon catch left on the sand. These are not anecdotal reports, they are my eyewitness accounts. At no time during my trips there did I ever see a Fish and Game warden to report this to. It is expensive to go to Alaska to fish the Tsiu River and I do not want to spend \$5,000.00 to have another trip spoiled by the commercial fishing operation on the Tsiu. Their behavior suggests that they feel that it is their resource and that the sports fishermen (who are bringing significant income to the area) are interlopers.

My questions to the board are as follows:

1) As Proposal 165 was in the public domain for many months, debated for approximately 1 1/2 hours, voted on and passed, why was supposedly new information suddenly found after the vote that forced a reconsideration of 165? I haven't seen any new information and listening to what was discussed by the board it is obvious that the information was not that impressive and more importantly, that this vote to change was due to political pressure brought to bear on the board after the initial vote. Unfortunately, as I am sure you realize, this political maneuvering reflects negatively on the Board as a whole.

Please right this wrong.

Sincerely,

Michael R Loudon

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Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Lousie Stutes



Submitted By  
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4/9/2018 12:24:46 AM  
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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I have read Proposal 165 as amended and am in full support. The solution suggested whereby the commercial and sport fishermen can co-exist are certainly logical. I can tell you I have fished Cohos in numerous other places, and nowhere is there harassment by commercial fishermen like that on the Tsiu. For me it was equally bad both times I was there. With the fishing area being such a short distance regulations must be imposed ASAP.

Of the places I have Coho fished there is not even a close second to the Tsiu. It is a remarkable resource, arguably the greatest place on earth to sportfish for Cohos. It must be preserved for all parties involved. The only thing bad about fishing there is being constantly buzzed at close range by commercial fishing boats, and working around their nets. I do not plan to return to the Tsiu until I have a peaceful environment in which to cast.

Sincerely,

Mike Murry

13709 Three Fathoms Bank Dr. Corpus Christi, Tx. 78418

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I have been coming to the Tsiu since 2014 and have fished all over the state. I believe that the Tsiu is the most pristine and premier Coho fishery in the state of Alaska. I had knee surgery a couple of years ago and have some difficulty maneuvering in the river. It is of great concern to my welfare when the boats are suddenly spiraling in the river disrupting the fish and my safety. When I learned there was a proposal to reduce the area available to avoid this disruption and danger associated with this type of commercial activity, I felt compelled to write this letter.

As a resident I urge you to allow as much area as possible for the sport fish users on the Tsiu River and to limit the unsafe boat activity of the commercial operators. If the proposal passes as written I will definitely rethink about ever coming back to the Tsiu and would discourage others as well as it just would not be a safe place to fish.

M. J. Westall

645 G Street #571 Anchorage, Alaska 99501

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Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Lousie Stutes



Submitted By  
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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I am amazed how uninformed the fishing authorities are regarding the commercial fishing practices on the Tsiu River. I have always been personally appalled at the way the commercial fishermen set their nets and then herd the salmon into the nets with their power boats. Also, it always amazes me to find dead or struggling salmon with net marks on them after the commercial fishermen clear their nets.....all seem to be "blushes"...Although there may be a market for "blushes" in Yakutat, my recollection is that the air freight to fly them there is a about \$.50 a pound. And in the three years that I have fished the Tsiu River I have never seen an Alaska Game Warden.

Please do not change your vote on proposal 165 as amended. It is a fair compromise to the everchanging environment on the Tsiu.

Mo Wicker  
3889 Broad Street Bessemer, AL 35224 205-436-0661 mowicker98@gmail.com

Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Lousie Stutes



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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

We get very upset when the commercial fisherman come along and ruin our fishing spot. They are rude and obnoxious in our opinions. If we make it this year, we won't fish after the commercial netting has started when they make it impossible to enjoy being along the Tsiu doing my favorite activity---fishing for silvers!

Jackie and Pat

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Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Lousie Stutes



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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

This letter is in response to the apparent inability to resolve the commercial and sport fishing issues on the Tsiu River system

I have fished the system 3 times in the past 15 years with my wife and son. The first two times were very enjoyable and were without conflict with the commercial interests fishing the river simultaneously.

The third trip was a very different experience with conflict with the commercial interests. As with all things in life some of the commercial fisherman were friendly and helpful while others hostile to the sport fisherman and actually ran over my son's fly line with their boat in their herding of the salmon into their net. I have never seen a game warden or Fish and Game employee on the river.

Our family has spent additional money for lodging, food, supplies and artwork in Cordova during the trips as well as the purchase of fishing licenses.

I hope that the Board will consider not changing their vote on proposal 165 as amended and be able to come to an equitable solution to sport fishing and commercial interests.

Sincerely,

Pat Riley

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Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Lousie Stutes



Submitted By  
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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I was astonished to hear of your actions regarding proposal 165. Having sportfished the Tsiu 3 times, I've seen many of examples of egregious behavior by some of the commercial fishers including harassing and wanton waste of fish. Mind you, I've nothing against commercial fishing and if done sustainably have seen it actually help the productivity of rivers. However, running skiffs both up and downstream to herd fish into gill nets, setting gill nets directly in front of sportfish folk (even pushing them out of the way on the beach to set a net stake), culling smaller or blushed fish from the nets and tossing them to float dead downstream is not, I think, legal or proper commercial fishing.

The annual trip the Tsiu is by no means, a cheap, easy or cavalier adventure – it is expensive, transport, lodging alone can run several thousands of dollars and that's only for the Cordova/Tsiu portion. Many of the fisherman I've met on these trips – in fact most, are from out of state and make this their annual Alaskan adventure. We all commiserate on the conflicts that appear to be growing between the commercial and sport fish communities – the out of staters with horror stories of what has happened to their local fisheries due to set netting. As the popularity of this fabulous fishery grows – and it has in just the three years that I've fished it – so too have the conflicts between the two fishery groups. How do I explain to the folk from outside why all of the dead silvers are littering the beach after a night's culling?

Lastly, I have to say that I've never seen or met any fishery official – ADF&G, or manager on the river, or in the area. I've heard rumors that there is one person charged with governing the area – but I've never seen them.

Proposal 165 as amended is well thought out, simple guidelines to enhance both the sport and commercial fisher's activity – please DO NOT reconsider your decisions, and view the evidence impartially.

Thanks You,

Patrick Speranza

11500 Discovery Heights Circle

Anchorage, AK 99515

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Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Lousie Stutes





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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I took my son, daughter, best friend to a fly out lodge on the Tsiu. I had heard that the Tsiu had one of the largest runs of Silvers on the planet. I had also heard that the river was fished commercially. When I contacted the lodge I asked about the commercial fishing and was told that they were regulated and could only fish 3 days per week. We were there Mon. thru Sat. and they fished every day. It was the last of the run and they were trying to get as many as they could. They also used jet boats to herd the fish into their gill nets. They would run the fish up and down the river pushing them into the nets. Often this was done just below where we were fishing, above where we were fishing and on several occasions they went right thru the hole where we were fishing. Not the experience we had hoped for. The lodge where we stayed was great. great food, service, guides. The fishing was very good, not as good as we had hoped for, but good. However, we would not go back because of the way the commercial fisherman treated the river. Jet boats herding the fish, planes flying in and out taking the fish to Yakutat, and 4 wheelers racing up and down the beach from net to net was not what we were looking for. If there are set rules, as to how the fish can be harvested, then there needs to be someone out there making sure they are followed.

Paul Reinsch

P.O. 849 West Yellowstone, Montana. 59758

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Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Lousie Stutes



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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

The revised regulation provides a fair split of the fishable water on the Tsiu for both commercial and sport fishermen. As a sport fisherman I don't think I should be forced to fish around commercial fishing nets and watch my friends fly line get cut by boats herding fish into nets. I don't travel all the way to the Tsiu river to watch and listen to the commercial harvesting of fish by herding fish into nets with boats. I go to the Tsiu for the wilderness experience as well as the fine silver fishing. Providing adequate fishing areas for commercial and sport fishing seems only fair.

Paul Winslow

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Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Lousie Stutes



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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I have been a guest at the Tsiu River Lodge on two separate occasions over the last 9 years and have spent over \$8,000 total for the experience, not including air fare and AK license costs. Not once have I seen a representative of the AK fish and game department policing the activities on the river. Moreover, my fishing experience has been ruined numerous times by commercial fishermen "herding" the fish into their set nets on the river right in front of me and downriver from me. In both cases the fishing is obliterated.

The pending possible reversal of ruling regarding the sequestering of the commercial operation was confusing. How could a ruling that separates the two operations be the slightest bit wrong? As it now stands the two operations are in nearly constant conflict with little or no oversight. The possible reversal of the ruling only perpetuates the status quo and the status quo is bound to provoke more conflict. The matter is chaotic and to yield to pressure only leaves unsettled chaos on one of the best sport fishing rivers in Alaska.

Please do not reconsider your actions and keep in place the principles previously documented.

Peter W Truitt

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**RE: TSIU RIVER** March 13, 2018

I am very disappointed to learn of the decision to possibly reconsider and reverse the earlier decision to provide some relief for us Tsiu sport fishermen !

I want to take this opportunity to comment on a few of the important issues from my perspective as an avid sport fisherman who at one time enjoyed fishing the Tsiu.

1. In the years past that I fished the Tsiu, I never once saw or even heard of a "resident" Fish & Game employee anywhere on the river. If I had been able to find one, I would have surely complained about being almost run down and virtually chased off the river by the "herding boats!"
2. I have observed numerous Coho left alongside the river by the commercial harvesters, Not sure why, but suspect it was due to their deep coloration.
3. The netters "herd boats completely disregard my presence on the river and at times cut right across my fishing line.
4. Changing a vote after one of the most thoroughly discussed and debated proposals, is questionable at best and leads to the suspicion of behind the scenes dealing!
5. I have reluctantly quit fishing the Tsiu as it is no longer an enjoyable experience and even entailed some physical risk from the commercial fishermen.
6. Sport fishing income may not be of important to Yakutat, but my 53000.00 to 54000.00 annual trip expenditure is to some venues.

In short, I won't be back on the Tsiu as long as conditions remain as they are, there are too many other more enjoyable places to fish and spend my money. That is a sad statement, as Yakutat has the opportunity to make the Tsiu a wonderful sport fishing venue if it had the foresight!

Sincerely,

PHIL ERICKSON

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**RE: TSIU RIVER** March 13, 2018

I am a 61yo cardiologist from Savannah, Ga and have made three trips to the Tsiu with friends and family. We usually travel with 4-6 fishermen. Stopping over in Cordova. The initial trips several years ago were wonderful. On my last visit I brought my older brother as a gift to him. The expense of time off and travel and lodge fees are all additive.

On my last and final visit I encountered commercial 'net' fisherman. They showed no regard for our space running right through our casting. They left dead fish on the banks and ran their plane right along the river.

I have no plans to return at this point. My time is too valuable and my expectations of this landscape have been ruined. While I hope to return to Alaska it will not include the Tsiu. I never encountered a representative on the river to complain to and at times felt my personal safety was at risk. I hope some resolution can be resolved in this matter but unfortunately there too are many places to fish to deal with these activities.

Philip Gainey  
Savannah Ga.  
912 547 5569

Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Lousie Stutes



Submitted By  
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4/8/2018 9:18:00 PM  
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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

We are avid fly fisher men in our 70's who have fished the Tsiu and other Alaskan rivers for decades. We accept the need for commercial fishing as well as sports fishing on the Tsiu and hope that both groups can co-exist sensibly and harmoniously and have equal rights to the river.

However, unfortunately, over the many years we have fished the Tsiu we have experienced hostile and aggressive attitudes and behaviors on the part of commercial fishermen towards sports fishermen. At times this hostility has become borderline violent and dangerous. For example, one year my wife Dr. Marlene White found herself trapped and encircled in 3 feet of water by 2 commercial fishing boats who came closer and closer at excessively high speeds. She was soon swamped, fell onto her rod in the frigid water breaking it. The propeller of one boat came so close it caught her line breaking it as well. I watched in horror while the fishermen laughed and continued driving their boats recklessly and provocatively while she lay in the water.. It took me a while to get to her and pull her out and she had to be immediately taken back to the lodge as she was soaked. Consequently, she was unable to fish the rest of the day.

After our first year staying at the Alaskan Wilderness Lodge we did not return for a few years because of similar unpleasant encounters with commercial fishermen. Last year we decided to return because of the superb facilities, expert fishing guides and the world class fishing for silvers the Tsiu is famous for. Now, once again we are reconsidering whether or not we want to put our lives in danger and return to Alaskan Wilderness Lodge at our age. Besides these types of incidents we have observed many other abuses and infringements of local fishing regulations. All of this seems unnecessarily stupid since it is sports fishermen who pump vast amounts of money into the local economy re: hotels, restaurants, liquor, sundries, transport, fishing licenses, etc. etc. while taking very little from the river. On the other hand, on more than one occasion, we have witnessed tons of silver salmon rotting on the beaches when weather did not permit planes to fly and take out the catch.

It is our hope that we will be able to return to our favorite fishing lodge and river and that new equitable and sensible regulations will address the problems and issues of sports fishing people like ourselves.

Sincerely,

Ray Barker-Smith

540 314 0349

Wild Wind Farm

5931 Graysontown Rd.

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Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Lousie Stutes



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**RE:TSIU RIVER**

Ive fished the Tsiu for 18 years coming up every year in September. The closed area to commercial fisherman should be at least ½ mile. I understand the importance of commercial and sport fishing and the need to share the resource. It becomes problematic, however, when the commercial guys are herding fish into nets at high speed.

Ray Landgraf

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**RE: TSIU RIVER** March 13, 2018

I am writing this letter to the Board as I understand there is an effort for a reconsideration of your decision, recently made on Proposal 165, which allows the river to be shared equitably between the user groups.

I am an avid angler that has fished the Tsiu River for several years and have stayed a couple different lodges there. Over the years, I have watched how the river changes. Every year it is different.

I can't emphasize enough the danger of having the commercial fishing boats circling around me as I am in the water trying to fish. This has happened to me on several occasions. It is very disheartening when you come off the river and sit down for dinner and the topic of conversation among the guests revolves around the boat harassment of the day. Myself and the other people staying at these lodges have taken time off work and are spending hard earned money to attempt to enjoy a relaxing fishing trip and instead we find ourselves complaining over dessert about who was almost swamped, run over or treated badly that day. It just can't continue or sport fisherman will lose interest and spend their money elsewhere.

I support the Board of Fish amendment to Proposal 165. The decision made at that meeting was fair and impartial to both sport and commercial fisherman. A decision that may save a life.

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I am terribly disappointed that the Board is considering reversing their decision, I have been following the progress of the meetings and I was so happy to hear about the original decision that I made calls to friends for a return trip this fall based on that decision. My group spends a lot of money to come to the Tsiu and fish, recent years have been very slow. I have been coming there on and off for 15 years and I couldn't believe what has happened with the commercial fishing and catches, I thought wow now there will be some proper management of this jewel, because in all my times on the river I not once saw a management officer, who is running the management and INFLUENCING decisions? Something is not right and smells of the whole dead fish I saw on the river banks, isn't there some jurisdiction or state law enforcement that should be made aware of the decision making process there?

Unfortunately, we will not be coming back to the Tsiu River unless there is better management.

Robert Rappaport

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I was one of a party of four who visited a few years ago in sept fishing for Silvers on the tsu. We had fun but something odd was experienced also. Commercial fisherman in boats buzzed us closely in the holes we fished . It seemed odd they did it. It occurred on days they had nets in, and on days they weren't "fishing". We were told it was legal and they were either herding fish into their nets or scouting where to set nets on the days they could fish. It didn't seem right and they certainly weren't considerate of what should be our rights in paying alaska license fees, and supporting alaska businesses. They ran their boats in circles in the holes, or near the holes we fished, even though their nets were several holes away( quarter mile or so ).

I suppose some friction is inevitable between sport and commercial interests. I know they have families to support. I just think if we did to them what they did to us, seemingly intentionally herding fish away from their nets, we get shot at, and I wouldn't blame them.

Robert Bolton  
Portland, Oregon

Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Lousie Stutes



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**RE: TSIU RIVER** March 13, 2018

I have fished the Tsiu River for salmon in each of the past 17 years. My experience there on any given day can be described as either the **GOOD**, the **BAD**, or the **UGLY**.

As suggested by my regular trips here, **GOOD** predominate. In no small part because of service and accommodations afforded me by Alaskan Wilderness Outfitting. And the fact that the salmon are frequently attracted to my fly. **BAD** days are mostly caused by uncontrollable factors such as non-biting fish and weather - wind, rain or high discolored water.

Unfortunately, interactions between commercial netters and sport anglers frequently cause **UGLY!** Days that make one wonder if the cost and effort needed to fish these waters is really worthwhile. **UGLY** events include:

1. seeing a net placed entirely across the river in a narrow spot.
2. being rocked by the wake from speeding boats (while standing in the river).
3. watched jet boats herd salmon into nets.
4. watched nets being set less than 15 yards from where I was fishing.
5. regularly seeing nets placed in deeper channels along one shore and extend out to very shallow areas (with insufficient water for fish to swim) effectively blocking all migration upstream.
6. being "buzzed" by fish cargo planes

All such experiences are inconsistent with a pleasant "wilderness" fishing experience!!

I recognize that there is much I don't know about the economic and conservation considerations that are factors in formulating the regulations governing both sport and commercial fishing on the Tsiu. I can say with complete certainty that: (1) the economic value of a salmon caught by an angler is **many** times that of a netted fish. And (2) the number of salmon killed by anglers is **but a fraction** of that taken by netters. These factors together with the substantial investment made by the fishing lodges in their facilities should make sustainability of a high quality fishery **a priority**.

Sincerely,

Ron Ott

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

My father, four brothers and I have made many trips to Alaska. We fished the Tsiu 5 times. We have also enjoyed six other Alaskan adventures at lodges located on other rivers. We have a unique perspective as our first Tsiu experience was over 25 years ago. It's hard to believe that much time has passed and how our family treasures our Alaskan experiences and realize how fortunate we have been to be able to make so many visits to our adopted "home state" of Alaska.

I realize and respect that commercial fishermen have every right to earn a living off a river as much as sport fishermen have every right to enjoy a peaceful fishing experience on the same river. There should be reasonable accommodations to allow for both. I would think there are plenty of fish to go around for all to be satisfied. The two interests should work together to reach a reasonable (not perfect) accommodation that each interest can live with.

2005, Tsiu experience was very disappointing. There was commercial fishing via nets in the river system side-by-side with the sport fishermen. This was a shock as most commercial fishing before was near the ocean in the lower part of the river system. The worst part of the trip occurred later in the week when we were quietly fishing in the river and commercial fishing boats dangerously approach the four of us and forced us to retreat out of the water and onto the banks. We felt violated. And after the boats continuously circled the area, one person yelled something to the effect of "no more fish for you guys." Obviously, we had no recourse and just shook our heads in disbelief at what just happened. Here we are spending \$25,000 to have the right to fish on the river and we were effectively forced off of it.

We will never go back to the Tsiu until a more reasonable accommodation is made. This fall will represent our third trip to Alaska since 2005, and as much as we like the camp and love the Tsiu, we will not spend our hard-earned money to return. In addition to the cost of staying at the camp, we spend thousands of dollars each trip in Cordova on hotels, meals and other items.

As I mentioned earlier, I believe the commercial fishermen have a right to earn a living fishing the river. However, the imbalance has forced us to remove the Tsiu from consideration for all future trips.

I hope a reasonable accommodation can be reached so that returning to the Tsiu is an option for us in the future.

Regards,  
RonTsoumas

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I'd just like to say what a great time we had fishing the Tsiu through the years. They were trips of a lifetime for both of us. We have never caught fish like we caught there on the Tsiu. It was amazing. We have parties and serve baked salmon. Everyone loves it.

One of our friends spent some time in Alaska, this year and didn't catch a fish. Their guide said it was a bad year. He didn't believe us when we told him about our trip but I showed him the pictures and the fish from our past trips. We have never caught fish like that anywhere. Having said that, it was a travesty what I saw the commercial fishermen doing to that fishery. The methods employed to harvest the fish should rise to the level of being criminal. I mean blocking the river, using boats to harrass the fish into the nets, with complete disregard to the sport fishermen present in the river and after that, leaving transport tubs filled with salmon, on the riverbank rotting in the sun. The bears were the only ones who benefited from those salmon. It pissed me off then and it still does. You could see the wanton waste and you knew it was wrong but you felt so helpless to stop it.

We both agree something must be done, if that sport fishery is to survive. It's all about the money and big business and the commercial salmon fishing lobby, is the big bully on the block.

Ronnie/Sherry Roberts

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I have worked at the Tsiu River Lodge for the 3 seasons. I have had the opportunity to spend a great deal of time out on the river as a Sports fishing Guide. In those 3 seasons I have been witness to a lot of harassment to our guests while they were simply trying to enjoy the vacation of a lifetime. I am all about sharing and compromise especially when it comes to those who have to use this resource as an income. However, is it truly necessary for the Commercial fishermen to come and drop their nets directly at our feet when we have just as much right to be there as they do? I can tell you that if I were a paying guest, who spent a great deal of money to come to Alaska, with my family and friends, and I had an experience such as that, I would think twice about coming again. I was witness to many times when the Commercial Opener's took place, and most of them would simply fly right by my guests as they stood in the river already fishing, with their lines in the water, with their high powered boats, coming DANGEROUSLY close to them, causing large waves and forcing them out of the water. I have to ask, is it really necessary for them to herd the fish into the nets when they have their nets  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the way across the river, already blocking the channel. The Coho have no choice but to swim into the nets, but yet they have to "rush" the process by using motorized boats. I find it completely unnecessary and simply appalling. I also was witness to one of our guests, who was wading in the river, at the mouth of the Tisu, and here comes a boat, once again, zooming right past him, and he couldn't have been more than a foot or more away, and as he passed him, he swung his boat and started to spin it in a circle as he was trying to herd the fish into the net. The guest was overcome by the waves and went under the water and thankfully someone was nearby to jump in and grab him before he was swept away. I can honestly say that was a very scary experience not only for him, but for those who witnessed it. What happened to the man in the boat? Well, he simply kept going about his business as if nothing happened!!

I can't believe that incidents such as this actually take place, especially in one of the most beautiful places in the world. I hear people all of the time talk about how they want to come to Alaska. How can you justify putting people in harm's way all just to make a profit off of the fish. Is it truly necessary to allow boats with motors to achieve their quota for the day? Whatever happened to the good old fashioned way of simply placing the nets in the proper places and just let nature take its course? I really think it's sad that it has come to this. There are people that are trying to do good things, to make the Tsiu River a better place to be for EVERYONE involved and have spent years doing research, observing the changes that take place. How can anyone truly make a difference when we can't even get the support of the Board of Fisheries to objectively hear both sides?

I was able to listen to some of the meeting that took place recently, and quite frankly, I spent a lot of the time shaking my head in disbelief! I heard someone talking about how the commercial fishery is now shut down. Complete lie!

The years that I spent on the river not once did anyone approach the sports fisherman on the river, presenting a badge of authority. I know of a female, with brown hair, who was an employee of the Fish and Game, but I can tell you right now she didn't spend the whole day on the river. The time she did spend on the river, it was visiting some with a couple of the Commercial Fisherman on the other side of the river, and I do believe that one of them was her boyfriend. How can she possibly be trusted to tell the truth when anything illegal take place? I feel that it is a complete conflict of interest, and clearly she wouldn't be giving you all the information needed to show anything negative toward them. There were MANY occasions where I was bringing my groups back to the Lodge after a day of fishing, and seeing several dead fish laying on the banks of the river with net marks on them. I had also come across a FULL bin of fish that apparently had gotten stuck. So it was left behind, in the hot sun for the better part of the day. We had to drive by it several times.

I am simply telling you what I have been witnessed to. I know I am only one voice, but this has got to stop somewhere. The lodges on this river bring a huge income to the State of Alaska. They pay their leases, they take good care of their guests and we want to continue to provide a wonderful experience for them. Please take all of this into consideration. I am not asking to put the Commercial fishing to a halt. I believe that there is a way for ALL user groups to come to a friendly agreement and still be able to get a great experience out of it. It would really be a shame if it takes someone getting hurt out there, in order for something to finally get done about this.

I am asking you to not reconsider proposal 165. As you have read, there is indeed Conflict between the 2 user groups. Plain and simple: something needs to be done about it before it's too late.

Sincerely,

Roslyn Sanders

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PC111  
2 of 2

Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Lousie Stutes



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**RE: TSIU RIVER** March 13, 2018

The Tsiu river is unique place. The river's floods and strong weather combine to constantly reshape the river. I have seen many of those changes. The usage of this river has also changed. In my early days as a guide there where a very limited number of sport fishing anglers utilizing the river. On days of commercial fishing openers, there was a fair stretch of river where anglers could get above the boats herding fish into nets. It was not perfect but all had space to take advantage of this excellent run of silver salmon. It seemed a fair arrangement for all commercial fisherman and outfitters to make their living on the river.

The river has changed dramatically since those days in the early 90s. Due to the increase in the popularity of sport fishing, the number of anglers grew every year. That is no surprise because the fishing experience is second to none. Over those years the river has become shorter. The area above commercial fishing zones decreased so much that all users compacted into the same spaces. The river seemed only to be managed for commercial fishing and very little attention was payed to sport fishing and the outfitters making their living on the Tsiu. When two user groups occupy the same space in a limited area it results in misunderstandings. That is not surprising due to the completely different nature of each group's techniques of fishing.

The river has made dramatic changes since those days. All parties, including policy makers, are now aware of those changes and usage increase of the Tsiu. The boundaries of commercial fishing should be set a half way down. This is the way it was in earlier times on the Tsiu and should be once again, especially because of the increase in popularity of sports fishing.

Sean Bowditch

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

Please forward this letter to whom it concerns. We fished on the Tsiu a few years ago. It was a fishing trip of a lifetime for both of us. We have never caught fish like that in our life and we've spread the word about Alaska and the Tsiu. We are considering making another trip this year but are very concerned about the pending legislation, in reference to the commercial fishing practices. The only negative feeling my husband and I have from our last visit, is due to the commercial fishing personnel, on the river, during our trip. While I was wading the river, catching fish, a commercial fisherman, in a boat, passed me at very close quarters, and went about setting his net. The net covered the entire navigable portion of the river channel, leaving the salmon no option, but the net. I looked around and saw the other sportfishermen (from the lodge) on the riverbank, not fishing but watching me in the river with the commercial fishermen. The people from the lodge had fished here before and "knew the drill" (get out of their way). This was my first time fishing the Tsiu, so it was a learning experience. As I continued fishing, the operator of the boat, ran circles around me, herding the fish, into the net. As the boat operator and another hand were removing the fish from the net and placing them into the transport tubs, he said, in a voice loud enough for me to hear, "I guess he doesn't know the fine for interfering with a commercial fisherman." I did nothing but stand in the river. What I would have given for a Fish and Game employee, to have been around. Later, this same date, I saw three (3) abandoned transport tubs, full of salmon, rotting in the sun. The bears and the seagulls were the only things that benefitted from those wasted, precious resources. It made me mad then and still does. You could see the wanton waste and knew it was wrong and the only people it bothered was the sportfishermen who were present. I was on the river for five days (in September) and never saw any sign of law enforcement personnel.

Dan, thanks for taking this challenge upon yourself, on behalf of all the sportfishermen, who fish the Tsiu. I know you have put in a lot of thought, effort and diligence, to bring Proposals before the board. I monitored portions of the meetings, on the internet. Upon Proposal 165 original passage, I thought maybe we were making headway, only to have the proposal, revisited, under ambiguous circumstances. The appearance of impropriety in the discussion of reversal is curious. I thought, oh well, the commercial fisheries have more money and 'stroke', so it's business as usual. From what I understand, this conflict between commercial and sport fishermen, is a long standing problem, which has not been addressed, either by the conflict resolution board of Yakutat (Scheinberg Report), Fish and Game, or the Governor's office. The time has come for resolution.

The sportfishing industry is a great boon to the Alaskan economy. Believe me, my wife and I certainly help support the Alaskan economy. My wife and I have made several cruise ship vacations to Alaska, and fished in several different locations, in Alaska and British Columbia, but we never ever caught fish, like we caught, in The Tsiu. I've already inquired with Alaska Wilderness Outfitters, about a trip this year, but I don't want to compete with the commercial fishermen. Trying to find a few days when they are not on the river. We really love traveling to Alaska, especially in the summer, when we need a respite from the heat. Again, on behalf of all the sportfishermen, who fish the Tsiu, Thanks for all your hardwork.

Have a blessed day.

Sherry Roberts

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## RE:TSIU RIVER

For the life of me, I just don't understand why the fishery board has to rehash an issue, which was already agreed upon in Sitka, without any additional information. Quit beating a dead horse, as we say in Texas. Seems to me, it is a terrible waste of time, effort and money.

Forcing the sport fishers into the commercial zone is dangerous. Believe me, I know firsthand. The first time I fished the Tsiu, I was fishing and I saw the other sport fishers get out of the water and I didn't know why. The commercial fishers, in their boats placed their nets across the whole river and then ran circles around me, coming dangerously close. It is not an experience I will ever forget. From then on, I tried to schedule my Tsiu trips when the commercial season was not open. Then seeing the abandoned fish transport buggies filled with salmon, rotting, just made me sick and appalled. These fish had not turned but were still bright silvers, fresh from the ocean, near the mouth of the river. What a terrible waste of the resource. The sport fishing area has shrunk while the commercial area has grown. When my wife and I (and other sport fisherman) come to Alaska to fish, we spend several thousands of dollars on food, lodging, transportation, and other amenities, greatly enhancing the Alaskan local economy. The sport fishermen have very little impact on the salmon population. We are allowed to keep four fish per day, while commercial fisherman catch complete schools of salmon numbering in the thousands. I understand commercial fishermen have every right to make a sustainable living but sport fishermen contribute quite a large sum, to the local economy. Don't kill the "golden goose".

Just a quick thank you, Dan, to you, for representing me and the other sport fishermen and for being our voice, before the fishery board. Sherry and I are looking forward to seeing you in September.

Ronnie/Sherry Roberts

Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Lousie Stutes



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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I am not sure if you are the correct person to receive this e-mail, but I would like to protest the recent actions of the Board of Fisheries regarding proposal 165 to regulate how commercial fishing for Silver Salmon takes place on the Tsiu river.

As a long time Alaska resident and a sports angler who has fished the river for 20 years I have seen fish harassed and wasted and I have seen sports anglers harassed and inhibited from fishing the river during commercial fishing openers. The proposed regulation 165 as amended attempted to establish some guidelines around the commercial openers to create a safer and more enjoyable experience for all users of the resource.

I was not at the meeting of the Fisheries Board, but as I understand it Proposal 165 as amended was actually approved by the Board before local politics resulted in a discussion to possibly reverse the ruling. It is unfortunate when one side of an argument has all the cards and allows no room for compromise.

The revised regulation provides a fair split of the fishable water on the Tsiu for both commercial and sport fishermen. As a sport fisherman I don't think I should be forced to fish around commercial fishing nets and watch my friends fly line get cut by boats herding fish into nets. I don't travel all the way to the Tsiu river to watch and listen to the commercial harvesting of fish by herding fish into nets with boats. I go to the Tsiu for the wilderness experience as well as the fine silver fishing. Providing adequate fishing areas for commercial and sport fishing seems only fair.

I had hoped the State of Alaska had moved beyond these kind of back door deals but unfortunately that is not the case. If you are not the correct person to review this issue, I would appreciate it if you would forward the e-mail to those who are reviewing the activities of the Board of Fisheries.

Steve Lambert

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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

I was recently extremely disappointed to learn that the proposed rule changes designed to reasonably address the on-going conflicts between commercial and sports fisherman on the Tsiu River could be overturned at the last minute by a special meeting. As an avid sports fisherman on the Tsiu, I have seen first hand the unwanted impacts of the poorly monitored commercial fishing activities and wanton waste of fish by commercial fisherman on the river. In my two weeks on the river spanning the past 12 years, I have never seen a Fish & Game employee on the river, especially during commercial fishing operations, which appear to be unregulated. The unmonitored placement of gill nets and the herding of fish with boats almost assures 100% kill during designated commercial fishing days on the Tsiu. Moreover, on the day after commercial fishing operations, the banks of the river are littered with wasted fish that were not "good" enough or "too expensive" to ship back to the cannery as required by Fish & Game regulations. This is a tremendous waste of one of the finest silver salmon fisheries in Alaska. The conflict between commercial and sports fishery on the Tsiu needs to be addressed and actively managed by the Fish & Game to ensure that ALL users can enjoy the benefits of this tremendous fishery. To have the important resolutions not addressed is simply unacceptable and unfair to all parties concerned.

Sincerely,

Steve Smith

Anchorage, Alaska

Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Lousie Stutes



Submitted By  
Terry Brosh  
Submitted On  
4/8/2018 9:29:57 PM  
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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

First off I wanted to thank Dan Emhart for his hard work and dedication to the truly wild habitat of Alaska. Some people do not realize how truly unique the Tsiu river is because they live in Alaska and take it for granted, how sad. The native americans in days gone by would never waste food. What happened? Personally I have never witnessed the tragedy of waste, but I have seen the results and it is sickening. Lets talk about herding fish into nets, how could anyone in good a state of good mental health allow such a thing to happen. After spending thousands of dollars to come to the Tsiu and countless hours on the river I have never seen the full time on sight fish and game employee.

I think it is time for the board to take a hard look at this for future generations not just for todays so called needs! Again thanks to Dan for all his hard work, I just hope this letter can help in some small way.

Terry Brosh

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Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Lousie Stutes



Submitted By  
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4/9/2018 12:51:32 AM  
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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

On my last trip to the Tsiu I was fly fishing with four friends on the river when a commercial net fisherman landed his jet boat in the bottom of the hole that we were fishing and proceeded and set his net across the bottom of the hole. I was playing a salmon that I had hooked at the time and the commercial fisherman just set his net about 20 yards downstream from where I was playing the fish. It was as if the commercial fisherman wanted my salmon to get caught in his net. I landed the fish, released it and watched in horror as the commercial fisherman went to the far top end of the hole above where my friends were fishing and proceeded to use his jet boat to herd all of the fish down stream into his nets. It was deliberate and intimidating. He used a series of figure 8 maneuvers that boiled up the river. He had miles of open water to set nets, but he chose our fishing spot to make his non verbal statement of disgust for sport fishermen. At the end of his boat maneuvers all of the salmon in hole were netted or spooked. We left to find another placeto fish.

I have enjoyed sport fishing in Alaska for the last ten years and have been a tourist and business visitor in past times. I have always enjoyed the people and respected them and their unique way of life and ultimate respect for nature. This commercial fisherman is a huge stain on your tourism industry. Although the fishing was excellent on our trip, the story is about the ass that ruined it for us.

Thomas O Moe

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Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Lousie Stutes



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4/8/2018 9:31:43 PM  
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**RE:TSIU RIVER**

Alaskan Wilderness Outfitting Company operates a sport fishing lodge on the Tsiu River and is in opposition to Proposal 165. Moving the markers up river would limit the sport fishermen even more in finding a place to get away from the commercial fishermen which has historically been .5 to 1.5 miles commercial free. The river has changed direction and is half the length and there is limited amount of areas to fish. The proposed move would not benefit the commercial fishery due to the shallow water in the area, but only take away more area from the sportfishermen.

Sincerely yours, Tom Prijatel, Owner, Alaskan Wilderness Outfitting

Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Lousie Stutes



Submitted By  
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4/9/2018 12:54:27 AM  
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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

During my last trip to the Tsiu River Lodge, I experienced an unpleasant situation on the river with the commercial fishermen. I think it is important that I relate this to you since it will affect my decision to return in the future. This was discussed with the guides at the lodge, but I thought it would be appropriate to advise you in writing since it will influence my decision to return in the future. Unless something is done to improve their conduct, I will not be returning to fish the Tsiu.

I understand the commercial fishermen had the authority to fish the river during the time I was there. However, their action of traversing the river in front of our fishing area, running within less than 30 feet of us, and forcing us to stop fishing for fear of injuring someone in the boat was arrogant and dangerous. They showed no respect for our presence on the river and allowed us very little peace and quiet to fish only a small part of the river. They also set their nets across the river from us and often ran in circles to drive the fish into their gill nets.

I personally watched one group of commercial fishermen load more than 53 fish into a cart for processing while our party of over 6 fishermen tried to harvest our limit of fish. I personally fail to understand the position that the Alaska Game and Fish Department has taken on commercial fishing versus sport fishing. The sport fishing industry clearly brings in more revenue to the state than the commercial fishing industry. A relatively small number of commercial fishermen are awarded the privilege of reaping the greatest amount of the available resource while the sport fishermen are left with less and less. Regrettably, it has affected my decision to return in the future.

Sincerely,

Vernon Broussard

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Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Lousie Stutes





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## RE:TSIU RIVER

My name is Vernon Broussard and am a resident of the state of Texas. I have fished the Tsiu River six years and have experience the great fishing the river offers. I was disappointed to hear that the Alaska Fish and Game will have a rehearing on Proposition 165. The ALASKA FISH AND GAME board is a very important position and have a very important responsibility to maintain the resources throughout the state for EVERYONE I have experience on a personal basis in Texas what the commercial fishing industry did to our fishing in Texas and seen what had to happen in order to correct the matter. The board needs to be proactive is this matter concerning the TSIU river and consider the matter objectively with the limited resource available. The resource should be available to everyone equally. The number of people utilizing the river both resident and non resident WILL increase and the commercial industry will also want to increase their share. Unfortunately their is a limited amount of resource (Silver Salmon) and the board should seek the best use of the resource and not be unduly influenced by the commensal industry in this matter.

Signed: VERNON BROUSSARD 3943 E Peach Hollow Circle, Pearland, TX [vjbroussardsr@yahoo.com](mailto:vjbroussardsr@yahoo.com)

Cc: Gov Bill Walker    Congressman Don Young    Senator Gary Stevens    Representative Lousie Stutes



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**RE: TSIU RIVER**

March 13, 2018

This is an email to the board concerning my disappointment in voting to consider reversing their decision on the Proposal 165. The decision was based on after the fact information that was very questionable.

I have personally fished the Tsiu River on 5 separate occasions and have been harassed on several occasions while fishing the river. It was very disappointing after spending the time and money to travel to the area and be harassed while trying to enjoy the outing. I have personally spent over \$25,000 on the five separate trips my wife and I have taken to the Tsiu.

One year, I tried to avoid the commercial season by scheduling my outing before September 1, only to have the commercial season open early and still experienced the usual interference from the commercial fisherman.

The resource belongs to everyone and the recreational fishermen have as much right to the fishing as do the commercial fisherman. The board should give serious consideration to Proposal 165 as amended. It is in the best interest of everyone.

Sincerely,

V. Broussard

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