

2049

**Comments to the 2014 Alaska Board of Fish meeting in Anchorage, Alaska  
from Jim Sykes**

FR: Jim Sykes, PO Box 696, Palmer, AK 99645  
DT: 29 January 2014

Dear Chairman and other Members of the Alaska Board of Fish,

My name is Jim Sykes, 38 year Alaska resident. I currently serve as member of the Matanuska Susitna Borough Assembly, which unanimously passed three resolutions (numbers 14-010, 14-011 and 14-012) in support of all possible measures that help restore fisheries in our Mat-Su Basin rivers and streams.

Resolution 14-011 specifically opposes 2014 Board of Fish proposals numbered 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, and 290. The same resolution also supports proposals 142 and 282 to maximize the opportunity for Mat-Su residents to participate in personal use fisheries.

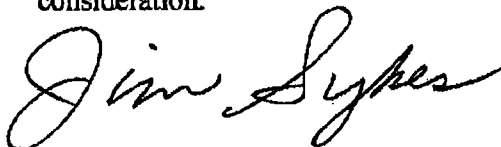
The personal use fishery is a critical part of the annual food supply for my wife and me. We participate in the personal use dipnet fishery at Kasilof. However, we would like to have the opportunity to get our year's fish here in Mat-Su. The huge decrease in Mat-Su fish stocks means a decrease in available food, tourism and related economic opportunities.

Some attribute the in-river downturn to pike, bad culverts and pollution. However, there doesn't seem to be convincing evidence to support this conclusion. I have been following recent genetic and fish destination studies that suggest that a large contributing problem is interception of Mat-Su salmon in upper Cook Inlet. So I don't buy the idea that all fish destined for Mat-Su rivers and streams ought to be caught in Cook Inlet without having a chance to spawn.

Our Borough Fish and Wildlife Advisory Commission, consisting of highly qualified people who have been working on these issue for decades, tell me that everything that can be done needs to be done in order to restore our salmon runs in Mat-Su. Good scientific evidence needs to be used for allocation decisions. Restored Mat-Su fishereis will then return greater numbers of fish to Cook Inlet. It' will be a win-win success.

While we have the potential to share the rewards for all types of fishing in Mat-Su rivers and Cook Inlet, we face an immediate and serious problem of not enough fish returning to spawn. All fishing groups have an interests in helping restoration in Mat-Su as quickly as possible. Then all Cook Inlet fishing users can share in the success of more available fish stocks.

Please consider and support the above mentioned Mat-Su assembly resolutions that comment on the issues at hand. More broadly for the benefit of Mat-Su and Cook Inlet fisheries cannot allow the continued downward trend in Mat-Su salmon populations. We need to take all available opportunities to restore Mat-Su fish runs to benefit everyone living in and around Cook Inlet. Thank you for your consideration.



Jim Sykes  
Phone contact 354-6962