

My name is Geri Groeneweg and I live in Anchorage.

First I'd like to thank you for the opportunity to be heard by this board. As a lifelong Alaskan, I am proud of this public process concerning fish and game resources management and I am grateful that all people including myself, can be part of it.

I am part of the sportfish user group on the Kenai River. The salmon that my family and I have caught over the 30 plus years that we have fished the Kenai River have not only provided a rich and rewarding family-cultural experience - but too have provided a major part of our family's food source.

I'm not a fishery biologist but it does not take a scientist to understand that king salmon have a problem and we owe it to them to do all we can to help them. It seems like we should let every king salmon swim until they meet minimum escapement numbers in the spawning grounds. It does not seem to me that we can afford to kill them until there is a healthy in-river return.

I am in support of proposal 209 which would set fair and equitable restrictions for all user groups in order to best protect the king salmon stocks.

Commercial fishing with a net is not discriminatory. Most every single fish that swims into a set net dies. Certainly everyone would have to agree that there is a very high - perhaps a 100% mortality rate on fish that hit the nets. Every fish dies, kings and sockeye, the net cannot release fish.

King salmon by-catch numbers are high. Can we really afford this amount of king salmon to be lost due to net fishing for sockeye right now? Is the income derived from catching one species worth the extinction of another? It seems to me that until fish numbers are met - all commercial net fisheries that directly affect Kenai River bound king salmon need to be stopped completely or at least severely restricted in hopes to increase future king runs

Hook and line anglers are able to release all king salmon and impact the fishery with very low mortality rate. Catch and release mortality rate is very low. This is not my opinion it is a widely known fact.

Let's say commercial net fishing was closed in total for the 2014 season until escapement numbers were met.

Is it fair to shut down all sport fish effort as well? No, not in my opinion.

If the Kenai went to no bait, and every single king salmon that was caught with hook and line was released immediately- the impact to the king salmon population would be the same as shutting down the entire sport fishery. Very little to no fish dying before they made it to the spawning grounds.

You can simply not say that for net fishing. In nets fish die every fish not only the targeted species.

In other areas around the state - if commercial fishers are shut down then it is widely popular with the commercial fishing lobby that sport fish should be shut down as well.

And sadly the only justification that commercial fishers would have for shutting sport fish down if comm fish was shut down is simply, good old fashioned spite. And spite should not be any argument in rational reasoning.

I would ask the board to allow ADF&G to be able to base any necessary methods and means of conservation efforts - on the empirical data of the impact to the species - and please do not base those same efforts on economic impact or emotion.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Geri Groeneweg

Geri Groeneweg
9333 Copper Drive
Anchorage, AK 99507
907-337-5867