

Alaska Board of Fisheries Committee Summary

COMMITTEE B

Commercial Salmon December 9, 2012

Board Committee Members:

1. Vince Webster, *Chair
2. Tom Kluberton

Alaska Wildlife Troopers:

1. Lt. Oleck

Alaska Department of Fish and Game Staff Members:

1. Sue Aspelund
2. Dan Gray
3. Paul Salomone
4. Steve Morstad
5. Lowell Fair
6. Jim Hasbrouck
7. Gregory B. Buck
8. Ian Fo
9. Matt Jones

Advisory Committee Members:

- | | |
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| 1. Timothy Enright | Lower Bristol Bay Advisory Committee (LBBAC) |
| 2. Peter Christopher Sr. | Nushagak Advisory Committee (NAC) |
| 3. Lloyd O'Connor | Nushagak Advisory Committee (NAC) |
| 4. Randy Alvarez | Lake Iliamna Advisory Committee (LIAC) |
| 5. Jonathan Forsling | Togiak Advisory Committee (TAC) |

Public Panel Members:

- | | | |
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| 1. Lloyd O'Connor | Self | Set |
| 2. Dylan Braund | Self | Set |
| 3. Katherine Carscallen | Self | |
| 4. Roland Briggs | Self | Set |

5.	Eric Meyer	Kvichak Setnet Association	
6.	George Wilson Jr.	Levelock Native	Drift
7.	Billie Delaney	Self	Set
8.	Kevin McCambly	Self	Set
9.	Stan Small	Self	Set
10.	Eric Beeman	Self	Set
11.	Eddie Clark	Self	Set
12.	Pete Caruso	Self	Set
13.	Joe Faith	Self	Set
14.	Kevin Meyer	Self	Set
15.	Hattie Albecker	Self	Set
16.	Art Woinowsky	Self	Drift
17.	Daniel Farren	Self	Drift
18.	Harlan Bailey	KSA	Set
19.	Kenny Wilson	Self	Drift
20.	Frank Schroeder	Self	Sport
21.	John Wise	Self	Drift
22.	David Harsila	AIFMA	Drift
23.	Kim Rice	Self	Set

Federal Subsistence Representative:

1.	George Pappas	USFWS
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The Committee met December 9, 2012 at 8:30 a.m. and adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

PROPOSALS BEFORE THE COMMITTEE WERE: (22 total) Registration and Reregistration (56), Fishing Gear Specifications and Operations and Vessel Identification (16 – 23, 31), Closed Waters (26 – 29), Landing Requirements (30), and Management Plans (67, 69, 75 – 77, 85, 86).

PROPOSAL 75 – 5 AAC 06.361. Nushagak–Mulchatna King Salmon Management Plan.

This proposal would restrict the commercial sockeye salmon drift gillnet fishery to the Wood River Special Harvest Area (WRSHA) until king salmon escapement is two days ahead of the projected escapement curve. It would also require any commercial drift gillnet fishing prior to June 28 to occur in the Igushik Section of the Nushagak District or in the WRSHA. Further, it would reduce the annual bag limit for sport-caught king salmon to two fish per year in the Nushagak–Mulchatna drainage.

Comment Summary:

Department:

- This would restrict management tool

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

Public Panel Comments:

- IAC – Question for the department: Would this change escapement goal or management plan? No.
- This proposal could be allocative between set and drift.
- Set gillnetter – Open to proposals that conserve kings. Suggest minimum escapement plan for anglers. While department considered 2012 run a success, he felt it was not because some restrictions were imposed.

Public Panel Recommendation: No support.

PROPOSAL 76 – 5 AAC 06.320. Fishing periods. This proposal would limit commercial fishing to 75% of tides in any 48-hour period. It also suggests that commercial fishing cannot occur for more than 24 hours in a 24-hour period, the intent of which is unclear.

Comment Summary:

Department: None.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

Public Panel Comments:

- KSA – No support.
- Would limit management options.

Public Panel Recommendation: No support.

PROPOSAL 77 – 5 AAC 06.361. Nushagak–Mulchatna King Salmon Management Plan.

Restrict the commercial fishery in the Nushagak District to no more than 12 hours in a 24–hour period and not allow consecutive commercial fishing periods on high tides if restrictions are enacted in the sport fishery.

Comment Summary:

Department:

- Limits management options.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

Public Panel Comments:

- Drift Gillnetter – Don't wish to restrict department
- KSA – No support.
- IAC – No support.

Public Panel Recommendation: No support.

PROPOSAL 85 – 5 AAC 06.3XX. Togiak River King Salmon Management Plan. The proposal requests development of a “Togiak River King Salmon Management Plan” similar to the existing *Nushagak–Mulchatna King Salmon Management Plan* (NMKSMP).

Comment Summary:

Department:

- Don’t have tools to capture inseason data on kings in Togiak. Can’t justify a management plan.
- Question from the chair: Have we tried sonar in Togiak? Answer: Yes, but there were problems with apportionment and problems with chum movement patterns and Dolly Varden.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative:

- USFWS did mark and recapture project for 5 yrs. (RC 38)

Public Panel Comments:

- Drift gillnetter – Support the concept if the department has the numbers to make this happen.
- TAC – Supports a management plan to conserve Togiak kings. Concerned that stock may decline without attention. Intent was to get a management plan similar to the NMKSMP in order to safeguard Togiak kings.
- NAC – It is understandable that Togiak desires more protection for Togiak kings.

Public Panel Recommendation: No consensus.

PROPOSAL 86 – 5 AAC 06.3XX. Togiak River Coho Salmon Management Plan. The proposal seeks to “develop a new Togiak River Coho Salmon Management Plan” similar to the existing *Nushagak River Coho Salmon Management Plan* (NRCSMP).

Comment Summary:

Department:

- Similar issues as with proposal 85. We don’t have inseason data to justify a management plan.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

Public Panel Comments:

- Chair notes that proposal 85 comments apply here. No objections.

Public Panel Recommendation: No consensus.

PROPOSAL 56 – 5 AAC 06.370. Registration and reregistration. Drift gillnet fishermen would be required to register for Ugashik and Egegik districts prior to fishing either district between June 1 and July 17.

Comment Summary:

Department: None.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

Public Panel Comments:

- LIAC – No support. Would potentially put more boats in Naknek-Kvichak.
- Drift gillnetter – Current regulation works well. This proposal comes from General District concept to deal with overescapement.
- Set gillnetter – Supports more boats in Ugashik early in season and this is the issue the proposal tries to address.
- Set gillnetter – Some support: some do not.

Public Panel Recommendation: No consensus. Substitute language submitted in RC 111.

PROPOSAL 16 – 5 AAC 06.331. Gillnet specifications and operations. The proposal would allow set gillnets to remain in place between openings on consecutive tides.

Comment Summary:

Department:

- This would limit management. This proposal would allow gear to remain in place during closures. This proposal only applies to nets and not running lines.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

Public Panel Comments:

- Set gillnetter – No support. Potentially, some sites may fish through closures.
- Set gillnetter – Would this cause set gillnetters to pull gear? Wants clarification.
- LIAC – Opposes because it would prevent fish from moving into the district between closures.
- Set gillnetter – Opposes due to nets going dry at low tide, potentially with fish in them.
- Set gillnetter – Opposes as current regulations work well.

Public Panel Recommendation: No Support.

PROPOSAL 18 – 5 AAC 06.331. Gillnet specifications and operations. This proposal would allow set gillnet gear to be a maximum of 600 feet from the 18-foot high-tide mark in statistical area 321-50.

Comment Summary:

Department: None.

Alaska Wildlife Troopers:

- Note exceptions exist in regulations to change running line rules. Removing requirement that running line be attached to the shore might be a potential compromise.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

Public Panel Comments:

- Drift gillnetter – Supports. Notes that this only applies to Ugashik Village and would mitigate a navigation hazard.
- Resident of Ugashik – Agrees with previous comments and adds that if nets were brought in from 600ft to 400ft, this would solve the hazard.
- Set gillnetter – Does not support shortening gear.
- Set gillnetter – Does not support. Current regulations can accomplish the goal of this proposal and what is needed is a compromise. The set gillnetters have been losing out and need more flexibility to catch at historic levels.
- Question from Chair: Have sandbars moved? Answer from set gillnetter: No.
- Set gillnetter – Supports as it would remove a hazard to navigation
- Set gillnetter – Navigation issue for small area. There should be a better solution than this proposal.

Public Panel Recommendation: No consensus. Substitute language proposed in RC 127.

PROPOSAL 19 – 5 AAC 06.366. Ugashik District Set and Drift Gillnet Sockeye Salmon Management and Allocation Plan. The proposal seeks to prohibit drift gillnetting within 1,000 feet of the mean high-tide line inside Ugashik Bay between June 1 and July 17. The proposal defines “inside Ugashik Bay” as east of a line drawn between Smokey Point on the north side and across Ugashik Bay to South Spit.

Comment Summary:

Department:

- This would limit management options.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

Public Panel Comments:

- Set gillnetter – Does not support. Does not think it is necessary.
- KSA – Doesn't support.
- Drift gillnetter – Does not support. This would negatively impact drift fleet.
- Set gillnetter – Does not support because drift gillnetters might deploy between set gillnets.

Public Panel Recommendation: No support.

PROPOSAL 20 – 5 AAC 06.331. Gillnet specifications and operations. The proposal would limit set gillnets to established sites and within 1,000 feet of shore on outside beaches of the Ugashik District from June 1 to July 17.

Comment Summary:

Department: None.

Department of Law.

- Notes that the board has no authority to regulate shore leases. This falls under the jurisdiction of DNR.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

Public Panel Comments:

- Chair polls for support—finds none.

Public Panel Recommendation: No support.

PROPOSAL 21 – 5 AAC 39.280. Identification of stationary fishing gear. This proposal would require that the name of the permit holder be added to anchor buoys at set gillnet sites in letters 6 inches high and 1–inch wide, in a contrasting color.

Comment Summary:

Department: None.

Alaska Wildlife Troopers:

- Anything that aids identification is looked upon favorably by enforcement.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

Public Panel Comments:

- Set gillnetter – There isn't an issue of unidentified sites currently so this proposal is not necessary.
- Set gillnetter – Marking buoys with more info makes markings too small.
- Set gillnetter – Not everyone has large enough buoys to fit all the required information.
- Notes from Chair: There is no requirement for a sign on the beach. This regulation was removed in Cook Inlet because landowners were requiring lease. As long as the information required is on a buoy, you don't need a sign.
- KSA – Current regulations are sufficient. Don't need this proposal.

Public Panel Recommendation: No support.

PROPOSAL 22 – 5 AAC 39.280. Identification of stationary fishing gear. The proposal would require that signage at set gillnet sites be marked in letters 12 inches high by 1-inch wide and in a contrasting color.

Comment Summary:

Department: None.

Alaska Wildlife Troopers:

- Chair question to trooper: Is it true that signs are not required? Answer: That is correct, and this is a statewide regulation.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

Public Panel Comments:

- Set gillnetter – requests clarification that he did not need set gillnet set signage.

Public Panel Recommendation: No support. Substitute language submitted in RC 122.

PROPOSAL 23 – 5 AAC 06.334(a)(2). Identification of gear. The proposal would change drift gillnet marking requirements to one cork at each end of a drift gillnet.

Comment Summary:

Department: None.

Alaska Wildlife Troopers:

- Question to trooper: Can I mix shackles with my wife? Answer: as long as I can identify gear I'm okay.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

Public Panel Comments:

- Set gillnetter – Does not support.
- Set gillnetter – Supports current regulations; notes that current regulations are not onerous.

Public Panel Recommendation: No support.

PROPOSAL 31 – 5 AAC 06.343. Vessel identification and 5 AAC 39.119. Vessel identification. The proposal would allow use of an ADF&G vessel registration number for marking of skiffs used to operate set and drift gillnets.

Comment Summary:

Department: None.

Alaska Wildlife Troopers:

- If boats are identifiable then enforcement has no issue.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

Public Panel Comments:

- Set gillnetter: support anything that aids enforcement.

Public Panel Recommendation: No consensus. Substitute language submitted in RC XX.

PROPOSAL 17 – 5 AAC 06.331(o). Gillnet specifications and operations. This proposal would prohibit a set gillnet permit holder from using two permits to fish one net offshore of another net in the Nushagak District.

Comment Summary:

Department: None.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

Public Panel Comments: None.

Public Panel Recommendation: No action taken due to action taken on permit stacking.

PROPOSAL 29 – 5 AAC 06.350(e)(1). Closed waters. The proposal, as written, would move the northern boundary of the Togiak River Section outside of the district. The proposal was likely intended to change the northern boundary of the Togiak River Section for drift gillnet fishing only to be outside the narrow channel at the mouth of the Togiak River.

Comment Summary:

Department:

- Proposed coordinates are outside of the district. Believes intent was to move line away from the mouth of Togiak River.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

Public Panel Comments:

- TAC – Supports any measure that conserves Togiak kings.

Public Panel Recommendation: Consensus to support with substitute language submitted in RC 121.

PROPOSAL 26 – 5 AAC 06.350(e). Closed waters. The proposal would move the northern boundary of the Togiak River Section southward from June 1 until June 30 by an undetermined amount. It appears that the proposer has given latitude and longitude points as a mixture of hundredths of minutes and seconds and so the department cannot determine the exact placement of the proposed boundary.

Comment Summary:

Department:

- Moving the line could displace 15–20 set gillnet sites. Believe the intent of the proposal was to move the drift gillnet northern boundary of the Togiak River Section and suggest different coordinates in Figure 29-1 in RC 2. This line would rely on geographic features, making compliance easier.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative:

- Notes that recent radio-tagging project suggests some back and forth movement in the upper bay and mouth of the river; suggests erring on side of conservation.

Public Panel Comments:

- Set gillnetter: Don't support if this would displace set gillnetters.
- BBNA – Plans exist to continue tagging project of USFWS. Funds currently being sought.

Public Panel Recommendation: No consensus.

PROPOSAL 27 – 5 AAC 06.350. Closed waters. This proposal would adjust the closed water boundary at the mouth of the Igushik River to reflect the historical boundary.

Comment Summary:

Department:

- When the department converted boundary markers from Loran to latitude/longitude, the conversion was not accurate. The conversion resulted in elimination of a set gillnet site that was at the historical boundary. The proposal would restore the Igushik Section boundary to the historical position.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

Public Panel Comments:

- Chair notes that this is a housekeeping proposal.

Public Panel Recommendation: Support.

PROPOSAL 28 – 5 AAC 06.350(e). Closed waters. This proposal would adjust the closed water boundary at the mouth of the Togiak River to make it reflect the historical boundary.

Comment Summary:

Department: None.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

Public Panel Comments:

- Chair notes that this is a housekeeping proposal.

Public Panel Recommendation: Support.

PROPOSAL 30 – 5 AAC 06.375. Landing requirements. This proposal would allow a set gillnet vessel to transport fish through the Snake River Section of the Nushagak District with no nets on board the vessel.

Comment Summary:

Department: None.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

Public Panel Comments:

- Set gillnetter – Intent is to go through an area that is prohibited in current regulations, which forces people to take unsafe routes at times. People use this route already and substitute language should be drafted.
- Set gillnetter – Proposal addresses safety concerns. Wondered if this might be an enforcement issue. Chair asked if he would support if substitute language could be drafted? Answer: Yes.
- Drift gillnetter – This is a safety issue. This area is the roughest in Nushagak Bay.
- Drift gillnetter – Support as long as it is enforced.

Public Panel Recommendation: Consensus to support with substitute language submitted in RC 129.

PROPOSAL 67 – 5 AAC 06.364. Naknek-Kvichak District Commercial Set and Drift Gillnet Sockeye Salmon Fisheries Management and Allocation Plan. The proposal would stagger fishing periods throughout the run in the Naknek-Kvichak District.

Comment Summary:

Department:

- Current fishing practice is to fish at 7ft flood and stop at 7ft ebb. Have EO authority to fish low tides if necessary.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

Public Panel Comments:

- Drift gillnetter – Concerned about Naknek king sport harvest opportunity and noted that there is no evidence that king harvest has impacted sport fishing.
- Sport angler – Support anything that improves king runs in Naknek River.
- LIAC – No support. There has been no need for this proposal in recent years.
- Chair comments that the intent of this proposal is to preserve kings and that there are several RCs that apply. Notes that kings have been in decline generally and asks if public supports restrictions on Big Creek? Sport angler notes that proposals to close this area have been made in the past and that current regulations reflect those efforts.

Public Panel Recommendation: Consensus to oppose as written. See substitute language submitted in RC XX.

PROPOSAL 69 – 5 AAC 06.373. Alagnak River Sockeye Salmon Special Harvest Area Management Plan. This proposal would open the Alagnak River Special Harvest Area (ARSHA; Figure 69-1) to set gillnet gear whenever the Kvichak Section is open to commercial fishing.

Comment Summary:

Department:

- Table 69 in RC 2 lists Alagnak River escapement. No tower in operation on the Alagnak at this time and we do not manage based on Alagnak escapements.
- This proposal could result in an increased harvest of kings.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

Public Panel Comments:

- Drift gillnetter – Does not support.
- Set gillnetter – Opposed if ADF&G does not have escapement counts.
- Kvichak drift gillnetter – Concerned with interception of Kvichak River fish in ARSHA.

Public Panel Recommendation: No support.