

James Weller
7131 Chester Ct
Anchorage, AK 99504
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RC 009

Dear Alaska Board of Fisheries:

I'm writing in opposition of Proposal 5 AAC 55.023, "Close a portion of Main Bay to sport fishing." I have sport fished in main bay for the last 5 years with families that have been doing it for 20. What I see does not coincide with the descriptions in the proposal. The community that congregates each year at Main Bay is respectful of the law, each other, property and cooperates with the hatchery. The two way radios light up with communications between the hatchery and sport fisherman. We even see hatchery employees fishing the weir from the docs.

I'm sure that the ADF&G Sockeye Salmon Culture Protocol serves a good purpose and I appreciate the efforts everyone supporting this resource. Given the ratio of commercial to sport harvests, it seems unlikely that the number of fish injuries related to sport fishing out weighs the number of injuries from commercial gill nets. We routinely catch fish injured by gill nets. I seriously doubt that sport fishing significantly contributes to the "waste of the salmon resource."

Please also consider that this is not the Kenai River. It is not an incredibly accessible spot that just anybody can drive up to. One must have the resources, skills, and community to reach this far point as a sport fisherman. You are not addressing a large scale problem with this proposal.

While the intent of the proposal, eliminating issues with the barrier net and maintaining quality stock, is good at heart, I'm not confident the statements in the proposal are accurate. I'm also not confident that such a heavy handed approach is necessary. I encourage stakeholders to review the data and if necessary, consider alternate approaches. I think you would be better served to work within the sport fish community to resolve any issues rather than thinking that a law will achieve the desired outcome. How much would it cost to enforce this proposal if passed?

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
James Weller