

This letter is in opposition to Proposal 5. We are late to comment because the Proposal was unknown to us earlier. Pardon if you're receiving it in error. We're trying to get it to everyone that might help.

We are unsure of PWSAC's motives for this proposal, but it surely isn't identified by any of the issues outlined in their proposal.

- "A growing sport fishery has developed..." – It may be growing, but if so, it's awfully slow growth. My family has fished the head of Main Bay since the late 80's. There are more sport boats there now, but not a lot more. What's grown is the commercial fishery. Where there were only a handful of nets in the past, now they choke the entire bay.
- "The integrity of the barrier net has often been compromised" – Well, what do expect when you stretch a net across a fishing hole? Isn't repairing nets a cost of doing business in a fishery? Are we the only people that fish with hooks instead of nets?
- "Sport fishing inside of the brood holding area has occurred" – Well, Duh! That's where the fish are. Before the net was installed, it was possible to catch fish farther from the hatchery, as the schools milled in and out of the AGZ. After the net was installed, it has become almost impossible to catch fish outside the AGZ. The fish cannot come back out of the net.
- "The number of injured fish resulting from attempted snagging has increased" – Maybe 1 in 5 snagged fish get away, so maybe as many as 1,000 total are damaged but not caught. Out of those numbers that get away, most of them are already net-scarred anyway. So we're talking less than 300 or 400 damaged fish that were useable before being hit by a hook.
- "Injured fish must be culled from the broodstock, which results in a waste of the salmon resource" – That is so transparently misleading as to be stupid. Sport fishermen are eating several thousand fish that otherwise die and rot behind the net, preventing the waste of salmon, not causing it. That net wastes several times more fish than sport fishermen ever could.

This Proposal made into Regulation would kill this sport fishery. WHY? Certainly not for any of the reasons outlined by PWSAC. PWSAC's website indicates their mission includes sport fishing...

"PWSAC produces hatchery-born, ocean-raised wild salmon for the commercial, sport, personal use and subsistence fisheries in the Prince William Sound and Copper River regions.

Why in the world does PWSAC want to cut us out of a fishery we have been doing for decades? We can only assume it is due to pressure from the commercial guys, who make it clear every chance they get they would like to see us gone.

Submitted by Dave Walker  
via Dave Lofland