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ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

STAFF COMMENTS
ON COMMERCIAL, PERSONAL USE, SPORT, AND GUIDED SPORT
FINFISH REGULATORY PROPOSALS

FOR THE UPPER COOK INLET MANAGEMENT AREA

ALASKA BOARD OF FISHERIES MEETING
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

FEBRUARY 1–12, 2008

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The following staff comments were prepared by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game for use at the Alaska Board of Fisheries (Board) meeting, February 1–12, 2008 in Anchorage, Alaska. The comments are forwarded to assist the public and Board. The comments contained herein should be considered preliminary and subject to change, as new information becomes available. Final department positions will be formulated after review of written and oral public testimony presented to the Board.

ABSTRACT

This document contains Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) staff comments on commercial, personal use, sport, and guided sport finfish regulatory proposals for the Upper Cook Inlet Management Areas. These comments were prepared by ADF&G for use at the Alaska Board of Fisheries meeting, February 1–12, 2008 in Anchorage, Alaska. The comments are forwarded to assist the public and Board. The comments contained herein should be considered preliminary and subject to change, as new information becomes available. Final department positions will be formulated after review of written and oral public testimony presented to the Board.

Key words: Alaska Board of Fisheries, staff comments, Upper Cook Inlet, finfish, management, regulatory proposals, personal use, sport, guided sport, commercial fisheries.

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73	**S**	Rewrite the Central District Herring Management Plan to simplify and correct errors that have occurred in the regulation	1
74	**N**	Prohibit use of spotter pilots	2
75	**N**	Prohibit use of spotter planes within one hour of commercial open periods	3
76	**N**	Modify drift gillnet area for Kasilof Section	3
77	**O**	Redefine demarcation of Kenai and Kasilof sections	4
78	**N**	Reopen the Southside of Chinitna Bay to gillnetting	23
79	**N**	Remove restrictions from drift and set gillnet fisheries for coho protection	5
80	**N**	Modify the dates of the Central District for the Kenai and East Forelands sections	7
81	**N**	Change season dates for Kenai and East Forelands Sections	8
82	**N**	Open Kenai and East Forelands sections	9
83	**N**	Extend the Upper Subdistrict late-run sockeye salmon season to August 15	10
84	**N**	Allow set gillnet fishing until August 15	11
85	**N**	Delay season closure for Kenai and East Forelands sections	12
86	**N**	Specify that the set net fishery will close by emergency order	13
87	**N / O**	Clarify transition between sockeye management and coho management	14
88	**N**	Delete prescribed sockeye salmon harvest closures	15
89	**N**	Close Central District commercial fishery by executive order	80
90	**N**	Change weekly fishing periods to 3 periods per week after August 10	19
91	**N**	Repeal mandatory July 17 and 26 restrictions for the Kenai and Kasilof rivers	84
92	**O**	Repeal Kenai River coho plan	259
93	**N**	Use 25,000 sockeye salmon for the trigger point to open the Kasilof Section prior to June 20 (author noted June 15)	16
94	**N**	Reopen set gillnet season south of Blanchard line after June 15	17
95	**N**	Change weekly fishing periods from Mondays/Thursdays to Mondays/Fridays	20
96	**N**	Increase the number of fishing periods from two to per week to three periods per week.	21
97	**N**	Allow commercial harvests of salmon from time specified on Monday, Wednesday and Friday in the Central District	21
98	**N / S**	Restrict drift gillnet use in Upper Subdistrict	17
99	**N / S**	Clarify drift gillnet closure areas	18
100	**N**	Open a commercial fishery in Tuxendni Bay	37
101	**N**	Open a commercial fishery in Tuxendni Bay	37
102	**N**	Provide flexibility in regulation for the use of single filament gillnet web	23
103	**N**	Allow additional use of monofilament gillnets	25
104	**N**	Prohibit use of monofilament nets in Cook Inlet	26
105	**N**	Increase drift gillnet to 200 fathoms in the Upper Cook Inlet	27
106	**N**	Increase maximum drift gillnet depth to 60 meshes	27
107	**N**	Allow up to 200 fathoms of drift gillnet gear and allow joint ventures with concurrent fishing from one vessel by permit	28
108	**N**	Increase aggregate set gillnet gear length	29
109	**O**	Limit east side set gillnet gear to 3 strands	29
110	**O**	Allow commercial use of reef net gear for harvest of live fish in Cook Inlet	22
111	**O**	Change distance offshore for set gillnets in Cook Inlet	30
112	**N**	Allow set gillnet fishing in any district after 48-hour waiting period	31
113	**N**	Eliminate area registration for vessel for Cook Inlet and Kodiak salmon fisheries	32
114	**N**	Renumber Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plan to put umbrella plan first in the regulations	61
115	**N**	Return Upper Cook Inlet management plan to 1995 wording	70
116	**N**	Add personal use, sport and guided sport use to the priority for management purposes in Upper Cook Inlet	72
117	**O**	Amend umbrella salmon management plan to clarify escapement goals based on wild fish	73
N = Neutral; S= Support; O = Oppose; NA = No Action			

Summary of Department Positions for the 2008 Upper Cook Inlet Proposals (Continued)			
Proposal No.	**Dept. Position**	**Issue**	**Page No.**
118	**N**	Return to 1996 Kenai River sockeye plan	97
119	**O**	Identify Susitna River and Fish Creek as stocks with a yield concern under the Sustainable Salmon Policy and create conservation corridor	33
120	**O**	Designate Cook Inlet chum salmon as a Stock of Concern	34
121	**NA**	Increase the Yentna/Susitna escapement goals	45
122	**N A**	Increase the Yentna/Susitna escapement goals	46
123	**N A**	Eliminate Fish Creek stocking program until escapement goal met	60
124	**N**	Reorganize the Upper Cook Inlet Management plans by species	62
125	**N**	Revise the Upper Cook Inlet area management plans to address quality, sustainability and revitalize the industry	74
126	**N**	Amend the Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plan to clarify board intent regarding the commissioner's emergency order authority	63
127	**N / S**	Authorize the commissioner to issue EO openings to ensure escapement ranges are met	64
128	**N / S**	Clarify the intention to manage fisheries in season to meet the escapement goals	65
129	**N / S**	Clarify the BOF intent that achieving escapement goals supersedes specific time and area mangers flexibility	66
130	**N / S**	Clarify that achieving the established escapement goals is the primary management objective in the Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management plan	67
131	**N / S**	Manage to achieve in-river goals	68
132	**N / O**	Implement priorities among salmon management plans for Upper Cook Inlet	69
133	**N**	Specify from June 20 to August 20, Upper Cook Inlet salmon stocks will be primarily managed for high quality	75
134	**N**	Delete portions of Northern District management plan	47
135	**N**	Amend Northern District salmon management plan	48
136	**N / S**	Direct department to manage chum, pink, and sockeye salmon primarily for commercial uses	49
137	**N / S**	Eliminate the regulatory language from plans that direct the department to minimize harvest of Northern District and Kenai River coho in order to provide personal use, sport	50
138	**N / O**	Reinstate the pre-2005 Northern District Salmon Management Plan	52
139	**O**	Close commercial fishing to protect Alexander Creek stocks	53
140	**N**	Clarify escapement goal priorities regarding the Yentna and Kenai rivers	54
141	**N**	Allow longer sockeye season in Northern District	55
142	**N**	Allow additional coho fishing time after August 10 in Northern District	56
143	**N**	Manage Northern District Eastern Subdistrict by regular periods not tied to Yentna River escapement	57
144	**N**	Allow the commissioner to selectively close specific statistical areas in the Northern District commercial salmon fishery	58
145	**N**	Manage the east side of the Northern District independently	59
146	**N**	Remove reference to specific commercial fishing periods in the Northern District King Salmon Management Plan	38
147	**N**	Add Thursday to the allowed king salmon fishing periods in the Northern District	39
148	**N**	Increase maximum king salmon net length mesh size in the Northern District	41
149	**N**	Allow additional fishing time for the area located one mile south of the Theodore River to the Susitna River	43
150	**N**	Modify fishing periods in the Northern District	40
151	**N**	Allow drift gillnets during May and June in west side fishery	44
152	**N**	Modify the plan to provide for the following:	36
153	**S**	Define the pink salmon commercial fishing area in UCI	86
154	**N**	Allow earlier and more fishing periods for pink salmon harvest and delete permit requirements	86
155	**N**	Allow set gillnet use for harvesting pink salmon	87
156	**N**	Add set and drift gillnet opportunities to harvest pink salmon	88
N = Neutral; S= Support; O = Oppose; NA = No Action			

Summary of Department Positions for the 2008 Upper Cook Inlet Proposals (Continued)			
Proposal No.	**Dept. Position**	**Issue**	**Page No.**
157	**N**	Amend the Cook Inlet Pink Salmon Management Plan for commercial uses	89
158	**N**	Allow department to open set gillnet periods in Cook Inlet	89
159	**N**	Delete Cook Inlet Pink Salmon plan	90
160	**N**	Modify the Central District Gillnet Fishery Management plan to allow the area mangers flexibility	76
161	**N**	Repeal the Central District Drift Gillnet fishery management plans	77
162	**N**	Delete Central District Gillnet plan	78
163	**N / O**	Amend the Central District drift gillnet fishery management plan	81
164	**O**	Clarify August fishing periods in the Central District	82
165	**N**	Reinstate sunset provision for directed Cook Inlet west side drift gillnet fishery	83
166	**N / S**	Amend the Kasilof River Salmon Management plan	130
167	**N / S**	Revise Kasilof River management plan	131
168	**N / S**	Modify the Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan	133
169	**N / O**	Increase OEG based on updated data in the Kasilof and modify fishing periods	135
170	**N / O**	Open South Kenai Beach district whenever necessary to harvest in the Kasilof terminal area	152
171	**S**	Move guided sport fishing regulations out of commercial fishing regulations	153
172	**N**	Specify use of Kasilof River Special Harvest Area	146
173	**N**	Limit use of Kasilof Special Harvest Area	147
174	**O**	Eliminate Kasilof River Special Harvest Area	148
175	**O**	Establish corridor or time limits on nets to increase number of kings entering the Kasilof River during July	149
176	**O**	Modify Kasilof River late-run king salmon periods	150
177	**N**	Direct department to manage the Kasilof River sockeye salmon primarily for commercial uses	136
178	**N / O**	Modify OEG for Kasilof River sockeye	138
179	**N / O**	Increase Kasilof River OEG	139
180	**N**	Repeal the Kasilof Salmon Management plan	137
181	**N**	Increase area for set gillnet use and reduce area for drift gillnet use	140
182	**N**	Amend Kasilof River plan to limit Kenai River sockeye harvest	141
183	**N**	Limit gillnetters to one half mile from shore	142
184	**N**	Change area for set and drift gillnet use for Kasilof River	143
185	**N**	Expand Kasilof River special harvest area	144
186	**N**	Change area for set and drift gillnet use for Kasilof River	145
187	**N**	Direct the Kenai River late run sockeye salmon management plan to be abundance based for all user groups	91
188	**N**	Modify management plan for Kenai River late run sockeye salmon	94
189	**N**	Modify the Kenai River Late Run Sockeye Management Plan escapement goals	99
190	**N**	Modify Kenai River salmon escapement goals	101
191	**N**	Delete portions of Kenai River salmon late-run sockeye plans	104
192	**N**	Modify Kenai River late-run sockeye plan	107
193	**N**	Modify Kenai River sockeye salmon bag and possession limits	129
194	**N**	Set Kenai River late run sockeye escapement goal range of 400,000 to 700,000	116
195	**N**	Repeal regulations that require mandatory time and area closures, windows, and limit the commissioner's emergency authority	110
196	**N**	Modify Kenai River late run sockeye escapement goals	117
197	**N**	Establish Kenai River late run sockeye escapement goal range of 400,000 - 700,000	118
198	**N**	Amend the Kenai River late run sockeye management plan for commercial uses and establish escapement goals	119
199	**N**	Modify Kenai River salmon escapement goals	119
200	**N**	Remove windows for Kenai area	112
201	**N**	Modify Kenai River escapement goals	120
202	**N / O**	Amend windows provisions for Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Plan	114
N = Neutral; S= Support; O = Oppose; NA = No Action			

Summary of Department Positions for the 2008 Upper Cook Inlet Proposals (Continued)			
Proposal No.	**Dept. Position**	**Issue**	**Page No.**
203	**O**	Limit commercial fishing prior to availability of in-season run strength estimate	121
204	**N**	Eliminate regulatory language from the commercial plans that direct department to minimize harvest of late run Kenai River kings in order to provide personal use, sport use	96
205	**N**	Revise Cook Inlet management plan and allocation	123
206	**S**	Allow emergency authority on bag and possession limits in a sonar passage of less than 650,000 Kenai River sockeye salmon	125
207	**N**	Allow the commissioner to increase the bag limit up to 12 sockeye salmon if abundance exceeds four million	126
208	**N**	Allow additional harvest opportunity when in-river sockeye abundance warrants	128
209	**O**	Open a Kenai River Special Harvest Area	123
210	**O**	Increase commercial allocation of Russian River sockeye	124
211	**N**	Prohibit dipnetting on the Kenai River until BEG is met	155
212	**N**	Close personal use dipnet fishery on Kenai River until escapement goals are met	156
213	**N**	Link personal use dipnet openings to escapement numbers	158
214	**N**	Extend dipnet season on Kenai River	160
215	**N**	Increased harvest opportunity in personal use fishery in Kenai and Kasilof Rivers	161
216	**N**	Increase Kasilof River personal use household limit	163
217	**N**	Reduce personal use fishery limit to 5 salmon per person, 25 per household	165
218	**N**	Lower annual limits for personal use salmon harvest to 20 for head of household and 5 for each dependent and no more than 50% of limit may be taken from the Kenai River	167
219	**N**	Lower annual limits for personal use salmon harvest to 15 for head of household and 5 for each dependent	168
220	**N**	Prohibit personal use dipnets with mesh size over 2 1/2 inches	170
221	**S**	Implement motor type restriction for dip net fishing from vessel	171
222	**O**	Restrict 2-stroke motor boat use in personal use fishery	173
223	**O**	Require motorized boats utilizing the personal use fishery to be anchored or without power while fishing	174
224	**O**	Allow rod and reel in personal use fishery and identify consumptive users as a person fishing for winter supply	176
225	**S**	Increase days allowed to retain naturally-produced king salmon in the Kasilof River	204
226	**S**	Increase bag limit for hatchery stock king salmon on Kasilof River	206
227	**O**	Prohibit fishing after retaining a king salmon	208
228	**N**	Designate portion of Kasilof River as a king salmon spawning sanctuary	209
229	**O / N**	Prohibit power boats on Kasilof River	211
230	**O / N**	Restrict motorized use on portion on Kasilof River	212
231	**N**	Prohibit fishing from boat, July 1 through August 15, in portion of Kasilof River	213
232	**O / N**	Allow motorized use during king salmon season on the Kasilof River	215
233	**N**	Allow anchoring of boats in portion of Kasilof River	216
234	**N**	Modify Kasilof River sockeye bag limit	217
235	**O**	Open Chickaloon River to king salmon fishing	218
236	**O**	Modify rainbow trout bag limits for Kenai River drainage lakes and ponds	177
237	**O**	Modify rainbow trout bag limits for Kenai River drainage lakes and ponds	178
238	**S**	Expand rainbow trout spawning closure from the outlet of Skilak Lake to the Upper Killey River to include Dolly Varden	180
239	**O**	Reduce spawning closure season for rainbow trout	182
240	**O**	Prohibit all sport fishing during the rainbow trout spawning closure	183
241	**S**	Prohibit removing rainbow trout from the water during spawning closure	185
242	**N**	Prohibit removing rainbow trout or Dolly Varden from the water in catch and release fishing	186
243	**O**	Require single, barbless hooks in Kenai River upstream of Lower Killey River from August 21 - June 10	188
244	**O**	Require barbless hooks for rainbow trout or Dolly Varden in the Kenai River	191
N = Neutral; S= Support; O = Oppose; NA = No Action			

Summary of Department Positions for the 2008 Upper Cook Inlet Proposals (Continued)			
Proposal No.	**Dept. Position**	**Issue**	**Page No.**
245	**O**	Restrict gear for rainbow trout and Dolly Varden in portion of Kenai River	193
246	**N**	No fishing from anchored vessel in the swan sanctuary area, Skilak Lake /Kenai River from June 15 – December 31	195
247	**O**	Eliminate size restriction on Dolly Varden for Kenai River	196
248	**N**	Increase the bag limit for Arctic Char in the Cooper Lake	197
249	**S**	Amend this regulation to decrease the daily bag limit for lake trout in Hidden Lake	198
250	**S**	Allow up to five lines to fish for northern pike fishing in Arc Lake and Scout Lake	200
251	**S**	Allow up to five lines to fish for northern pike fishing in Stormy Lake	201
252	**N**	Prohibit releasing any northern pike while fishing in the Kenai Peninsula	202
253	**O**	Close fishing from 100 yards above ferry cable to 25 yards below cable on Kenai	220
254	**O / S**	Increase size of designated youth fishing area on the Kenai River	221
255	**O**	Increase size and bag limits for jack kings in Kenai River	222
256	**O**	Delete bag limit for king salmon under 28 inches on Kenai River	224
257	**O**	Increase size and bag limits for jack kings in Kenai River	225
258	**O**	Increase the jack king salmon size limit from 20" to 25" in Cook Inlet freshwaters	227
259	**O**	Modify bag limit to allow retention of hatchery stock king salmon in the Kenai River drainage	228
260	**O**	Modify bag limit to allow retention of hatchery stock king salmon in the Kenai River drainage	229
261	**O**	Eliminate Kenai River early-run king salmon slot limit	230
262	**O**	Eliminate Kenai River early-run king salmon slot limit	232
263	**O**	Amend the slot limit season for early-run king salmon on the Kenai River	233
264	**O**	Extend early-run king salmon slot limit below the Soldotna Bridge through July 14	235
265	**S**	Amend this regulation (from January 1 – July 14, a person may not possess a king salmon that has been filleted, headed, mutilated)	237
266	**O**	Restrict use of bait for early-run kings on portion of Kenai River	237
267	**O**	Allow use of bait in the early run Kenai River king salmon fishery, starting May 1 or June 1	238
268	**O / N**	Extend Funny River, Slikok Creek, and Lower Killey River sanctuary closures through July 31	239
269	**O / N**	Extend Funny River, Slikok Creek, and Lower Killey River sanctuary closures through July 31 and expand Killey area	241
270	**O**	Extend Kenai River king salmon season through August 7	243
271	**O**	Extend late-run king salmon sport fishing season through August 10	244
272	**NA**	Increase escapement goal for Kenai River late-run king salmon	244
273	**N**	Delete portions of Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon	245
274	**N**	Delete section (e) of the Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan	246
275	**N**	Limit non-resident permits for king salmon on Kenai River	247
276	**N**	Establish annual limits for salmon fishing by non-resident anglers	248
277	**O / N**	Prohibit non-residents from exporting more than 125 pounds of fish	249
278	**O / N**	Allow retention of sockeye salmon unintentionally hooked in the Kenai, Kasilof and Russian Rivers	250
279	**O / N**	Increase bag limit for coho salmon in Kenai Peninsula freshwater streams	251
280	**O / N**	Increase coho bag limit in Cook Inlet Area rivers	253
281	**O / N**	Increase bag limit for coho salmon in the Kenai River	256
282	**N**	Extend the coho salmon fishing season through November on Lower Kenai River and Skilak Lake	258
283	**N**	Add one drift boat only day on the Kenai River	261
284	**N**	Add one drift boat only day on the Kenai River	262
285	**N**	Add one drift boat only day on the Kenai River	264
286	**N**	Add one additional non-guided drift only day on the Kenai River	265
287	**N**	Add one additional non-guided drift only day on the Kenai River	266
288	**N**	Make Sunday, Wednesday, and Friday drift-only days on Kenai River	268
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Summary of Department Positions for the 2008 Upper Cook Inlet Proposals (Continued)			
Proposal No.	**Dept. Position**	**Issue**	**Page No.**
289	**N**	Phase-in additional drift boats only days on Kenai River	269
290	**N**	Prohibit fishing from motorized watercraft in Kenai River	271
291	**NA**	Require 4-stroke or direct fuel injection motors on the Kenai River	272
292	**NA**	Require 4-stroke or direct fuel injection motors on the Kenai River	273
293	**NA**	Require 4-stroke or direct fuel injection motors on the Kenai River	274
294	**NA**	Regulate motorized use for fishing on the Kenai River to reduce hydrocarbon pollution	275
295	**N**	Reduce fishing hours or restrict motorized use to reduce hydrocarbon discharge into Kenai River	277
296	**NA / N**	Restrict outboard motors to 35 hp on the Kenai River	278
297	**N**	Prohibit king salmon fishing from boats during a 48 hour period on lower Kenai River	280
298	**N**	Prohibit non-residents from fishing from a vessel unless accompanied be a relative between 6pm and 6am on the Kenai River	281
299	**O**	Open Kenai River below Soldotna Bridge to fishing from boats during king salmon season	282
300	**NA**	Require course for powerboat operation on Kenai River	283
301	**N**	Restrict use of motorized vessel for fishing on the Upper Kenai River near Kenai Lake	284
302	**NA**	Institute a limited entry program for guides on the Kenai and Kasilof Rivers	285
303	**N**	Modify existing Kenai River guide hours from 6am - 6pm, to 7am - 7pm	286
304	**N**	Modify existing Kenai River guide hours from 6am - 6pm, to 7am - 7pm	287
305	**N**	Modify existing Kenai River guide hours from 6am - 6pm, to 8am - 8pm	288
306	**N**	Prohibit guide boats with clients in fishing holes 10 minutes prior to opening times	289
307	**N**	Prohibit guides with clients from being on the river prior to 1/2 hour before start time	290
308	**N**	Separate the guided and unguided sport fishers in the lower Kenai river by day and time	291
309	**N**	Prohibit Kenai River guiding on Thursdays in June and July	292
310	**N**	Prohibit guides from fishing on Kenai River on Sundays	294
311	**N**	Prohibit guides from fishing on Kenai River on Sundays	295
312	**N**	Restrict licensed guides while fishing during non-guide hours on Kenai River	296
313	**N**	Limit guides on the Kenai River to only one client or group of clients per day during July	297
314	**N**	Open Kenai River guiding to one trip per day	298
315	**N**	Restrict Kenai River and Kasilof River guides to one trip per day on either river	299
316	**N**	Limit guides to only one client or group of clients per day for Upper Cook Inlet Rivers	300
317	**N**	Restrict guides from registering for both Kenai and Kasilof rivers	302
318	**N**	Restrict same day guiding on both Kenai and Kasilof rivers	302
319	**N**	Prohibit Kasilof River guided fishing when the Kenai River is closed to guided fishing	303
320	**N**	Restrict Kasilof River guided fishing on Mondays	304
321	**N**	Allow Kenai River guides to operate on Sundays in May and June, and no hour restrictions in May	305
322	**N**	Repeal the guide boat prohibition on Mondays in the Kenai River	307
323	**N**	Allow guides to fish from drift boats on the Kenai River in July	309
324	**N**	Allow a guide boat on the Kenai River to carry six persons instead of five during the month of July	310
325	**N**	Designate one day per week on the Kenai late run to guided anglers only	311
326	**O**	Allow guided fishing 7 days per week with each individual guide allowed 5 days per week on the Kenai	313
327	**N**	Eliminate Sunday closure for guides on the Kasilof River	305
328	**S**	Modify regulation prohibiting fishing by sport fishing guides when clients are present on the Kenai River	314
329	**S**	Align vessel registration regulations with DNR requirements that allow for un-registering guide vessels	315
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Summary of Department Positions for the 2008 Upper Cook Inlet Proposals (Continued)			
Proposal No.	**Dept. Position**	**Issue**	**Page No.**
330	**O**	Reduce open periods for king salmon sport fishing in Alexander Creek drainage	316
331	**S**	Close king salmon fishing on Alexander Creek	317
332	**S**	Close king salmon fishing on Alexander Creek	318
333	**S**	No fishing in Alexander Creek for a few years	319
334	**S**	Close king salmon fishing on Alexander Creek	320
335	**O**	Allow 24 hour fishing for king salmon in Unit 1 of the Susitna River drainage	321
336	**O**	Allow use of bait for king salmon fishing in Unit 1 of the Susitna River drainage	323
337	**O**	Raise daily bag limit for king salmon in Deshka River	324
338	**O**	Allow 24-hour fishing in Deshka River	325
339	**O**	Extend king salmon season in the Deshka River based upon escapement counts	327
340	**O**	Amend season dates for king salmon fishing in Unit 2 of the Susitna River Drainage	328
341	**O**	Allow multiple hooks two weeks earlier for king salmon fishing in Unit 2 of the Susitna River drainage	329
342	**O / N**	Increase bag limit of coho salmon for Alaskan residents in Parks Highway streams and Talkeetna River	330
343	**O**	Delay bait restrictions on Talkeetna River	331
344	**O**	Close Chuitna River to sport fishing above old cable crossing	332
345	**O**	Require unbaited, artificial lures year-round on the Little Susitna River	333
346	**O**	Allow use of bait in the Little Susitna River king salmon fishery from July 1 -13	334
347	**N**	Apply vessel restriction for fishing on Little Susitna River	335
348	**S / O**	Extend waters open to king salmon fishing near Eklutna Tailrace	336
349	**O**	Allow use of bait on Big Lake	337
350	**S**	Establish a spawning closure and decrease bag limit for burbot in Big Lake	338
351	**S**	Decrease bag limit for burbot in Big Lake	339
352	**S**	Amend these regulations (sport fishing through the ice for northern pike using five lines)	340
353	**S**	Increase number of lines allowed for pike fishing in Shell Lake	342
354	**O**	Allow up to 12 lines for pike while ice fishing in Northern Cook Inlet	343
355	**O**	Liberalize methods and means for Northern pike in fishing Deshka, Yenta and Susitna drainages	345
356	**O / N**	Establish personal use fisheries in selected Upper Cook Inlet drainages	346
357	**O**	Establish a limit for hooligan harvest in Cook Inlet	347
358	**O / N**	Open a personal use salmon fishery in the Beluga area	348
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COMMITTEE A: Cook Inlet Commercial Fishing
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Central District Herring

PROPOSAL 73: 5 AAC 27.409. Central District Herring Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would rewrite the Central District Herring Management Plan to simplify and correct errors that have occurred in the regulation.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Herring fishing in the Central District occurs only in the waters of Upper Subdistrict, Kalgin Island Subdistrict, Western Subdistrict, and Chinitna Bay Subdistrict. A person must register in the department's Soldotna Office no later than April 10 of the year in which the person intends to participate. From April 20 through May 31, the commissioner may open, by emergency order, herring fishing periods by emergency order for one fishing period per week, beginning on Monday 6:00 a.m. and closing Friday 6:00 p.m. Guideline harvest range is 0 - 40 tons of herring in the Upper Subdistrict.

In the Chinitna Bay, Kalgin Island, and Western Subdistricts, from April 20 through May 31, the commissioner may open, by emergency order, two 30-hour fishing periods per week. The guideline harvest ranges are: Chinitna Bay Subdistrict is 0 - 40 tons of herring, Western Subdistrict is 0 - 50 tons of herring, and the Kalgin Island Subdistrict is 0 - 20 tons of herring.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would have no affect on harvests.

BACKGROUND: In 1993, all herring fisheries in Upper Cook Inlet were closed to rebuild those stocks. The commercial fishery prior to 1993 operated 7 days a week, with as many as 374 permits issued each year, reaching a peak harvest of 482 tons. Fishing was allowed in both the Central and Northern Districts. The open season was from April 15 to June 30. In 1998, the department reopened a limited commercial fishery along the

eastside of Cook Inlet allowing only 2 days per week by emergency order from April 20 to May 20. In 1999, the department submitted several proposals to restructure this fishery to reduce the effort, harvest, and intensity of the harvest. These proposals were amended and adopted as the Central District Herring Recovery Management Plan. The fishing season under this plan was from April 20 until May 20 with two 30-hour fishing periods per week. The first 600 feet from mean high tide is closed to reduce the incidental harvest of salmon and Dolly Varden. The current restricted mesh size of between 2-1/8 to 2-1/2 inches in the commercial fishery effectively eliminates any significant harvest of salmon. The 600-foot closure from mean high tide further reduces the likelihood of any incidental harvest of salmon or Dolly Varden. This management plan was designed to reduce the harvest and participation in this fishery, to stabilize the fishing effort, and harvest herring at a consistent and sustainable level. When this plan was enacted, the Northern District as well as the Kustatan and Kalgin Island Subdistricts were closed because harvests in these areas were not ongoing at that time. In 2005 the BOF changed the fishing periods in the Upper Subdistrict to a single 108 hour period per week and allowed a modest harvest in the Kalgin Island Subdistrict.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department submitted and **SUPPORTS** this proposal. This proposal is considered housekeeping in nature.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

Aerial Spotting

PROPOSAL 74: 5 AAC 21.378. Prohibition on the use of aircraft.

PROPOSED BY: Chris Kempf

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would prohibit the use of spotter pilots in the Upper Cook Inlet area for one hour before, during, and one hour after a commercial salmon fishing period.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The use of aircraft to locate salmon for commercial fishermen is allowed without restrictions in the Upper Cook Inlet Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? It is likely that drift gillnet fishermen currently using aircraft may see a decline in their portion of the harvest.

BACKGROUND: Prior to 1996 spotters were employed by many drifters in Cook Inlet. When salmon prices declined in the early 1990's the use of spotter planes also declined. Spotter planes were banned during open periods beginning in 1996. The regulation was worded exactly as in this proposal. At the 2005 Board of Fisheries meeting, the use of spotter planes was again allowed during open periods.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 75: 5 AAC 21.378. Prohibition on the use of aircraft.

PROPOSED BY: Daniel R. Hakkinen

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would prohibit the use of spotter pilots in the Upper Cook Inlet area for one hour before, during, and one hour after a commercial salmon fishing period.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The use of aircraft to locate salmon for commercial fishermen is allowed without restrictions in the Upper Cook Inlet Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? It is likely that drift gillnet fishermen may see a decline in their portion of the harvest.

BACKGROUND: Prior to 1996 spotters were employed by many drifters in Cook Inlet. When salmon prices declined in the early 1990's the use of spotter planes also declined. Spotter planes were banned during open periods beginning in 1996. The regulation was worded exactly as in this proposal. At the 2005 Board of Fisheries meeting, the use of spotter planes was again allowed during open periods.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

Fishing Districts, Subdistricts

PROPOSAL 76: 5 AAC 21.200(b)(2)(C). Fishing districts, subdistricts, and sections.

PROPOSED BY: Owen Geer

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would redefine the current fishing area back to what it was prior to the previous Board of Fisheries meeting by changing the current regulations to 5 AAC 21.200(b)(2)(C) Kasilof Section: to a point at 60 degrees 27.10' N. lat. 151 degrees **25.05 W. long.** [25.70]. The northwest point of the Kasilof Section/Southwest point of the Kenai Section would be moved approximately seven tenths of a mile shoreward.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Kasilof Section is defined as all waters enclosed by a line from a point on the beach at 60 degrees 27.10' N. lat., to a point at 60 degrees 27.10' N. lat., 151 degrees 25.70' W. long., to a point at 60 degrees 12.75' N. lat., 151 degrees 32.05' W. long., to a point at 60 degrees 04.02' N. lat., 151 degrees 46.60' W. long., to an ADF&G regulatory marker located at 60 degrees 04.02' N. lat., 151 degrees 38.90' W. long.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would reduce the area open to drift fishing and likely result in a lower harvest by drift gillnets and an increase in set gillnet harvest. It would also require drifters to fish closer to Karluk Reef just north of the Kasilof River in order to stay within open waters.

BACKGROUND: Prior to 1999 the Kasilof Section was defined in regulation as that area within
three nautical miles of the mean high tide mark on the Kenai Peninsula shoreline. This area was difficult to fish or enforce as the only effective measure was with radar. In 1999 the areas were redefined using GPS points. At that time the point in question was delineated as 60 degrees 27.10' N. lat. 151 degrees 25.00 W. long. In 2002 this point was moved offshore to151 degrees 25.50 W. long because of the effects of this line near Karluk Reef. In 2005 the point was again moved offshore by the BOF two tenths of a mile to (151 degrees 25.70 W. long.) allow more area in the Karluk Reef area for drifting as a means of making it a more orderly fishery.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department in **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 77: 5 AAC 21.200(b)(c) Fishing districts, subdistricts, and sections.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai River Sportfishing Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would reduce the size of the Kasilof Section by moving the northern boundary south within ½ mile of the northern shore of the mouth of the Kasilof River. This area within one-mile of the Kasilof River is currently within the closed area at the stream mouth so in effect this proposal would be closing that area north of the Kasilof River to fishing for Kasilof Stocks, which is the majority of the fish within this area. By reducing the size of the Kasilof Section this proposal would also increase the size of the Kenai Section by approximately 4 miles.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Kasilof Section extends from one mile north of the Ninilchik River to 4.5 miles north of the Kasilof River, a distance of approximately 30 miles (straight line). The area is managed prior to July 8th primarily for

the harvest of Kasilof River sockeye salmon stocks, after July 8th it is managed for sockeye salmon stocks of both the Kenai and Kasilof Rivers.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Moving the northern boundary south would reduce the fishing power of the Kasilof Section and likely result in: 1) increased fishing time in the remainder of the section, 2) a reallocation of harvest to nets south of the Kasilof River mouth, 3) significantly increased escapement into the Kasilof River and 4) increase the king salmon harvest in the remainder of the 26 miles of open area with the increase in fishing time necessary to achieve the Kasilof Sockeye escapement goal. It would also increase the size of the Kenai Section and therefore include a large section of beach within the Kenai Section where the primary stock harvested would not be of Kenai River origin.

BACKGROUND: The current Kasilof Section boundary has been in effect since approximately 1985. Prior to that time, the demarcation line was approximately one-half mile farther south on Kalifonsky Beach that resulted in more conflicts than the current site location. These conflicts were due to having adjacent permit holders managed for different rivers. While the name of the section implies that the section is managed for Kasilof Stocks in reality it is managed for both Kenai and Kasilof Stocks. Early in the season prior to Kenai stocks showing in the district the entire area is opened or closed based on Kasilof run strength. By July 15th when Kenai stocks are commingled in the area, this area is managed for both Kenai and Kasilof stocks. If Kasilof stocks warrant additional harvest but Kenai stocks do not, the area is reduced to within one-half mile of shore instead of 1-1/2 miles and drift fishing is closed. If the harvest of Kenai River sockeye salmon stocks may be excessive in this reduced area, then the entire area is closed.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. Moving the northern boundary of the Kasilof Section to the mouth of the Kasilof River would decrease rather than improve the department's ability to manage for the escapement goals for the Kasilof or Kenai Rivers, and would tend to increase the king salmon harvest in the remaining area of the Kasilof Section set gillnet fishery.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

Fishing Seasons

PROPOSAL 79: 5 AAC 21.310. Fishing seasons.

PROPOSED BY: John Higgins

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would return the opening and closing dates in the Upper Subdistrict set and drift gillnet fishery in the Kasilof, Kenai, and East Forelands sections to what they were prior to 1999. The starting date of

commercial fishing in the Kenai and East Foreland sections would be July 1 instead of July 8. In addition, the closing date would be August 15 instead of August 10 and the 1 percent rule would also be deleted. The open area for drift gillnets after August 10 would also change. Currently after August 10 the drift area is restricted to Drift areas three and four on the west side of the inlet. Under this proposal the drift area would return to what was open historically. From 1978 until 1996 the open area for drifting was all waters of the Central District more than 5 miles offshore of the Kenai Peninsula shoreline.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Kasilof Section opens on June 25 unless the department estimates that 50,000 sockeye salmon are in the Kasilof River before June 25. The Department may then open the fishery prior to June 25, but not earlier than June 20. The Kenai and East Foreland Sections open July 8 for commercial fishing. The Kasilof, Kenai and East Foreland Sections close August 10 or when 1 percent of the set gillnet harvest is harvested during 2 consecutive fishing periods after July 31. The drift gillnet fishery closes by emergency order, except that fishing with drift gillnets may only occur in drift areas three and four after August 10.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would lengthen the commercial salmon fishing season in the Kenai and East Forelands Sections by up to 12 days and in the Kasilof Section by 5 days. Harvests of king and sockeye salmon would increase but would be dependent upon management actions. Allowing the harvest of later run sockeye salmon in the Kenai and East Forelands sections would likely increase the harvest of coho salmon returning to the Kenai River.

BACKGROUND: From 1978 until 1999 the commercial fishery in the Kasilof Section on the east side was managed from June 25 until August 15 to achieve sockeye salmon escapement goals in the Kasilof River and secondarily to achieve Kenai and Kasilof River king salmon escapements as well as Kenai River sockeye salmon escapements. During the same time period the Kenai and East Forelands Sections were managed from July 1 until August 15 for Kenai River sockeye and king salmon escapement goals. Because of a petition filed prior to the 2000 field season, coho salmon management was altered.

Since 1999 the Kenai River late run sockeye salmon in-river run goal has been exceeded 5 of 9 years and within the goal four times. During that same time period, the Kenai River was below the optimum escapement goal (OEG) twice, within the OEG four times, and was exceeded three times. The Kasilof River biological escapement goal has been exceeded 8 of 9 years. Since 2001, when the current OEG of 150,000 to 300,000 sockeye salmon was established, the OEG has been exceeded 6 of 7 years.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. However, the department does support the development of flexible management plans.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 80: 5 AAC 21.310. Fishing seasons.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai Peninsula Fishermen's Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would return the opening and closing dates in the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery in the Kenai and East Forelands sections to what they were prior to 1999. The starting date of commercial fishing in the Kenai and East Foreland sections would be July 1 instead of July 8. In addition the closing date would be August 15 instead of August 10. This closing date of August 15 may also apply to the Kasilof Section although not specifically included in this proposal. This proposal would also delete the current closed mandatory windows.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Kenai and East Foreland Sections open July 8 for commercial fishing. The Kasilof, Kenai and East Foreland Sections close August 10 or when 1 percent of the set gillnet harvest is harvested during 2 consecutive fishing periods after July 31. At Kenai River run strengths of less than 2,000,000 sockeye salmon, there are no mandatory commercial fishing closures (windows). At run strengths of 2,000,000 to 4,000,000 sockeye salmon, the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery will be closed for one continuous 36-hour period per week beginning between 7:00 p.m. Thursday and 7:00 a.m. Friday and for an additional 24-hour period during the same management week. At run strengths greater than 4,000,000 sockeye salmon, the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery will be closed for one continuous 36-hour period per week, beginning between 7:00 p.m. Thursday and 7:00 a.m. Friday.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would lengthen the commercial salmon fishing season in the Kenai and East Forelands Sections by up to 12 days and in the Kasilof Section by 5 days. Harvests of king and sockeye salmon would increase but would be dependent upon management actions. Allowing the harvest of later run sockeye salmon in the Kenai and East Forelands sections would likely increase the harvest of coho salmon returning to the Kenai River.

BACKGROUND: From 1978 until 1999 the commercial fishery in the Kasilof Section on the east side was managed from June 25 until August 15 to achieve sockeye salmon escapement goals in the Kasilof River and secondarily to achieve Kenai and Kasilof River king salmon escapements as well as Kenai River Sockeye salmon escapements. During the same time period the Kenai and East Forelands Sections were managed from July 1 until August 15 for Kenai River sockeye and king salmon escapement goals. Because of a petition filed prior to the 2000 field season, coho salmon management was altered. These changes included a shortened the season, reallocated fish to in-river users, restricted additional commercial fishing time and areas, and instituted mandatory closed windows. These changes have made it difficult to manage for the Kenai or Kasilof sockeye salmon escapement goals in years with large runs.

Since 1999 the Kenai River late run sockeye salmon in-river run goal has been exceeded 5 of 9 years and within the goal four times. During that same time period, the Kenai River was below the optimum escapement goal (OEG) twice, within the OEG four times, and was exceeded three times. The Kasilof River biological escapement goal has been exceeded 8 of 9 years. Since 2001, when the current OEG of 150,000 to 300,000 sockeye salmon was established, the OEG has been exceeded 6 of 7 years.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. However, the department does support the development of flexible management plans.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 81: 5 AAC 21.310. Fishing seasons.

PROPOSED BY: John Higgins

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would extend the current fishing season for the Kenai and East Foreland sections by 7 days earlier and 5 days later. It would also allow the season to start prior to July 1, but not earlier than June 25, under the circumstance that 100,000 sockeye salmon have passed the sonar at River Mile 19. Because the Kenai sonar counter is not installed until July 1 the early starting option will never occur.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Kenai and East Foreland Sections open July 8 for commercial fishing. The Kasilof, Kenai and East Foreland Sections close August 10 or when 1 percent of the set gillnet harvest is harvested during 2 consecutive fishing periods after July 31.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would lengthen the commercial salmon fishing season in the Kenai and East Forelands Sections by up to 12 days and in the Kasilof Section by 5 days. Harvests of king and sockeye salmon would increase but would be dependent upon management actions. Allowing the harvest of later run sockeye salmon in the Kenai and East Forelands sections would likely increase the harvest of coho salmon returning to the Kenai River.

BACKGROUND: From 1978 until 1999 the commercial fishery in the Kasilof Section on the east side was managed from June 25 until August 15 to achieve sockeye salmon escapement goals in the Kasilof River and secondarily to achieve Kenai and Kasilof River king salmon escapements as well as Kenai River Sockeye salmon escapements. During the same time period the Kenai and East Forelands Sections were managed from July 1 until August 15 for Kenai River sockeye and king salmon escapement goals. Because of a petition filed prior to the 2000 field season, coho salmon management was altered. These changes included a shortened the season, reallocated significant numbers

of fish to in-river users, restricted additional commercial fishing time and areas, and instituted mandatory closed windows. These changes have made it difficult to manage for the Kenai or Kasilof sockeye salmon escapement goals in years with large runs.

Since 1999 the Kenai River late run sockeye salmon in-river run goal has been exceeded 5 of 9 years and within the goal four times. During that same time period, the Kenai River was below the optimum escapement goal (OEG) twice, within the OEG four times, and was exceeded three times. The Kasilof River biological escapement goal has been exceeded 8 of 9 years. Since 2001, when the current OEG of 150,000 to 300,000 sockeye salmon was established, the OEG has been exceeded 6 of 7 years.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. However, the department does support the development of flexible management plans.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 82: 5 AAC 21.310. Fishing seasons.

PROPOSED BY: Gary L. Hollier

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would return the season opening date to July 1, extending the current fishing season by opening the Kenai and East Foreland sections 7 days earlier.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Kenai and East Foreland Sections open July 8 for commercial fishing. The Kasilof, Kenai and East Foreland Sections close August 10 or when 1 percent of the set gillnet harvest is harvested during 2 consecutive fishing periods after July 31.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would lengthen the commercial salmon fishing season in the Kenai and East Forelands Sections by up to 7 days. Harvests of king and sockeye salmon would increase but would be dependent upon management actions.

BACKGROUND: From 1978 until 1999 the commercial fishery in the Kasilof Section on the east side was managed from June 25 until August 15 to achieve sockeye salmon escapement goals in the Kasilof River and secondarily to achieve Kenai and Kasilof River king salmon escapements as well as Kenai River sockeye salmon escapements. During the same time period the Kenai and East Forelands Sections were managed from July 1 until August 15 for Kenai River sockeye and king salmon escapement goals. Because of a petition filed prior to the 2000 field season, coho salmon management was altered.

Since 1999 the Kenai River late run sockeye salmon in-river run goal has been exceeded 5 of 9 years and within the goal four times. During that same time period, the Kenai River was below the optimum escapement goal (OEG) twice, within the OEG four times, and was exceeded three times. The Kasilof River biological escapement goal has been exceeded 8 of 9 years. Since 2001, when the current OEG of 150,000 to 300,000 sockeye salmon was established, the OEG has been exceeded 6 of 7 years.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. However, the department does support the development of flexible management plans.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 83: 5 AAC 21.310. Fishing seasons.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai Peninsula Fishermen's Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would extend the current fishing season for the Kenai, Kasilof and East Foreland sections by 5 days, closing on August 15.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Kasilof Section opens on June 25 unless the department estimates that 50,000 sockeye salmon are in the Kasilof River before June 25. The Department may then open the fishery prior to June 25, but not earlier than June 20. The Kenai and East Foreland Sections open July 8 for commercial fishing. The Kasilof, Kenai and East Foreland Sections close on August 10 or when less than 1 percent of the set gillnet harvest is harvested for 2 consecutive fishing periods after July 31.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would increase the harvest of sockeye salmon and would likely increase the harvest of coho salmon returning to the Kenai River.

BACKGROUND: From 1978 until 1999 the commercial fishery in the Kasilof Section on the east side was managed from June 25 until August 15 to achieve sockeye salmon escapement goals in the Kasilof River and secondarily to achieve Kenai and Kasilof River king salmon escapements as well as Kenai River sockeye salmon escapements. During the same time period the Kenai and East Forelands Sections were managed from July 1 until August 15 for Kenai River sockeye and king salmon escapement goals. Because of a petition filed prior to the 2000 field season, coho salmon management was altered.

Since 1999 the Kenai River late run sockeye salmon in-river run goal has been exceeded 5 of 9 years and within the goal four times. During that same time period, the Kenai River was below the optimum escapement goal (OEG) twice, within the OEG four times,

and was exceeded three times. The Kasilof River biological escapement goal has been exceeded 8 of 9 years. Since 2001, when the current OEG of 150,000 to 300,000 sockeye salmon was established, the OEG has been exceeded 6 of 7 years.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. However, the department does support the development of flexible management plans.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 84: 5 AAC 21.310. Fishing seasons.

PROPOSED BY: Gary Deiman

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal, while not clearly written, would extend the current fishing season for the Kenai, Kasilof and East Foreland sections to close on August 15.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Kasilof Section opens on June 25 unless the department estimates that 50,000 sockeye salmon are in the Kasilof River before June 25. The Department may then open the fishery prior to June 25, but not earlier than June 20. The Kenai and East Foreland Sections open July 8 for commercial fishing. The Kasilof, Kenai and East Foreland Sections close on August 10 or when less than 1 percent of the set gillnet harvest is harvested for 2 consecutive fishing periods after July 31.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would increase the harvest of sockeye salmon and would likely increase the harvest of coho salmon returning to the Kenai River.

BACKGROUND: From 1978 until 1999 the commercial fishery in the Kasilof Section on the east side was managed from June 25 until August 15 to achieve sockeye salmon escapement goals in the Kasilof River and secondarily to achieve Kenai and Kasilof River king salmon escapements as well as Kenai River sockeye salmon escapements. During the same time period the Kenai and East Forelands Sections were managed from July 1 until August 15 for Kenai River sockeye and king salmon escapement goals. Because of a petition filed prior to the 2000 field season, coho salmon management was altered.

Since 1999 the Kenai River late run sockeye salmon in-river run goal has been exceeded 5 of 9 years and within the goal four times. During that same time period, the Kenai River was below the optimum escapement goal (OEG) twice, within the OEG four times, and was exceeded three times. The Kasilof River biological escapement goal has been

exceeded 8 of 9 years. Since 2001, when the current OEG of 150,000 to 300,000 sockeye salmon was established, the OEG has been exceeded 6 of 7 years.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. However, the department does support the development of flexible management plans.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery

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PROPOSAL 85: 5 AAC 21.310. Fishing seasons.

PROPOSED BY: Gary L. Hollier

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would extend the current fishing season for the Kenai and East Foreland sections by something less than 10 days.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Kenai and East Foreland Sections open July 8 for commercial fishing. The Kasilof, Kenai and East Foreland Sections close on August 10 or when less than 1 percent of the set gillnet harvest is harvested for 2 consecutive fishing periods after July 31.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would increase the harvest of sockeye salmon and would likely increase the harvest of coho salmon returning to the Kenai River.

BACKGROUND: From 1978 until 1999 the commercial fishery in the Kasilof Section on the east side was managed from June 25 until August 15 to achieve sockeye salmon escapement goals in the Kasilof River and secondarily to achieve Kenai and Kasilof River king salmon escapements as well as Kenai River sockeye salmon escapements. During the same time period the Kenai and East Forelands Sections were managed from July 1 until August 15 for Kenai River sockeye and king salmon escapement goals. Because of a petition filed prior to the 2000 field season, coho salmon management was altered.

Since 1999 the Kenai River late run sockeye salmon in-river run goal has been exceeded 5 of 9 years and within the goal four times. During that same time period, the Kenai River was below the optimum escapement goal (OEG) twice, within the OEG four times, and was exceeded three times. The Kasilof River biological escapement goal has been exceeded 8 of 9 years. Since 2001, when the current OEG of 150,000 to 300,000 sockeye salmon was established, the OEG has been exceeded 6 of 7 years.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. However, the department does support the development of flexible management plans.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery

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PROPOSAL 86: 5 AAC 21.310. Fishing seasons.

PROPOSED BY: Central Peninsula Advisory Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would change the current fixed date closure for the Kenai, Kasilof and East Foreland sections to close by emergency order.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Kenai, Kasilof and East Foreland Sections close on August 10 or when less than 1 percent of the set gillnet harvest is harvested for 2 consecutive fishing periods after July 31.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would increase the harvest of sockeye salmon and would likely increase the harvest of coho salmon returning to the Kenai River.

BACKGROUND: From 1978 until 1999 the commercial fishery in the Kasilof Section on the east side was managed from June 25 until August 15 to achieve sockeye salmon escapement goals in the Kasilof River and secondarily to achieve Kenai and Kasilof River king salmon escapements as well as Kenai River sockeye salmon escapements. During the same time period the Kenai and East Forelands Sections were managed from July 1 until August 15 for Kenai River sockeye and king salmon escapement goals. Because of a petition filed prior to the 2000 field season, coho salmon management was altered.

Since 1999 the Kenai River late run sockeye salmon in-river run goal has been exceeded 5 of 9 years and within the goal four times. During that same time period, the Kenai River was below the optimum escapement goal (OEG) twice, within the OEG four times, and was exceeded three times. The Kasilof River biological escapement goal has been exceeded 8 of 9 years. Since 2001, when the current OEG of 150,000 to 300,000 sockeye salmon was established, the OEG has been exceeded 6 of 7 years.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. However, the department does support the development of flexible management plans.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery

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PROPOSAL 87: 5 AAC 21.310(b)(2)(c)(iii). Fishing seasons.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai River Sportfishing Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would change the formula that could close the sockeye salmon fishing season for the Kenai and East Foreland sections earlier than August 10 from less than one percent to less than five percent of the season's total sockeye harvest has been taken per fishing period for two consecutive fishing periods. It would also modify the definition of a “fishing period” to mean a time period open to commercial fishing without closure for at least 12 and not more than 24 hours and therefore restrict a commercial fishing period length.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Kenai, Kasilof, and East Forelands Sections will close on August 10, unless closed earlier by emergency order after July 31, after the department determines that less than one percent of the season's total sockeye harvest has been taken per fishing period for two consecutive fishing periods. For purposes of this sub-subparagraph, "fishing period" means a time period open to commercial fishing without closure.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would most likely end the commercial salmon fishing season earlier than what the current regulations mandate in the Kasilof, Kenai and East Foreland sections. The season would close after July 31 when less than 5 percent of the seasons harvest has been taken during two consecutive fishing periods. Under the proposed formula the commercial fishery would very likely close on the second fishing period after July 31 or fishing periods of less than 12 hours would be necessary. A shorter season would decrease the ability of the area manager to achieve sockeye salmon goals in the Kenai and Kasilof Rivers.

BACKGROUND: From 1978 until 1999 the commercial fishery in the Kasilof Section on the east side was managed from June 25 until August 15 to achieve sockeye salmon escapement goals in the Kasilof River and secondarily to achieve Kenai and Kasilof River king salmon escapements as well as Kenai River sockeye salmon escapements. During the same time period the Kenai and East Forelands Sections were managed from July 1 until August 15 for Kenai River sockeye and king salmon escapement goals. Because of a petition filed prior to the 2000 field season, coho salmon management was altered.

Since 1999 the Kenai River late run sockeye salmon in-river run goal has been exceeded 5 of 9 years and within the goal four times. During that same time period, the Kenai River was below the optimum escapement goal (OEG) twice, within the OEG four times, and was exceeded three times. The Kasilof River biological escapement goal has been exceeded 8 of 9 years. Since 2001, when the current OEG of 150,000 to 300,000 sockeye salmon was established, the OEG has been exceeded 6 of 7 years.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. However, it is **OPPOSED** to this proposal on the biological issues it raises with regards to harvesting evenly throughout the run and management for escapement goals.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 88: 5 AAC 21.310(b)(2)(c)(iii). Fishing seasons.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai Peninsula Fishermen's Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would delete current regulatory language that closes the season on August 10 and prescribes a harvest closure based on a percentage of sockeye salmon harvested in the commercial fishery after July 31.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Kenai, Kasilof, and East Forelands Sections will close on August 10, unless closed earlier by emergency order after July 31, when the department determines that less than one percent of the season's total sockeye harvest has been taken per fishing period for two consecutive fishing periods. For purposes of this sub-subparagraph, "fishing period" means a time period open to commercial fishing without closure.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? By deleting this section the season closure would occur by emergency order and the one percent provision would no longer be in regulation. This proposal may increase the commercial harvest of sockeye, coho, chum, and pink salmon by an unknown amount.

BACKGROUND: From 1978 until 1999 the commercial fishery in the Kasilof Section on the east side was managed from June 25 until August 15 to achieve sockeye salmon escapement goals in the Kasilof River and secondarily to achieve Kenai and Kasilof River king salmon escapements as well as Kenai River sockeye salmon escapements. During the same time period the Kenai and East Forelands Sections were managed from July 1 until August 15 for Kenai River sockeye and king salmon escapement goals. Because of a petition filed prior to the 2000 field season, coho salmon management was altered.

Since 1999 the Kenai River late run sockeye salmon in-river run goal has been exceeded 5 of 9 years and within the goal four times. During that same time period, the Kenai River was below the optimum escapement goal (OEG) twice, within the OEG four times, and was exceeded three times. The Kasilof River biological escapement goal has been exceeded 8 of 9 years. Since 2001, when the current OEG of 150,000 to 300,000 sockeye salmon was established, the OEG has been exceeded 6 of 7 years.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. However, the department does support the development of flexible management plans.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 93: 5 AAC 21.310.(b)(2)(C)(i). Fishing seasons.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai Peninsula Fishermen's Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow commercial fishing to begin as early as **June 15** [June 20] in the Kasilof Section if the department estimates that **25,000** [50,000] sockeye salmon are in the Kasilof River by that date.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Kasilof Section opens on June 25 unless the department estimates that 50,000 sockeye salmon are in the Kasilof River before June 25. The department may then open the fishery prior to June 25, but not earlier than June 20.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would open the Kasilof Section earlier in some years, allowing the harvest of earlier run sockeye and king salmon returning to the Kasilof River. The harvest of Kenai River early-run king salmon would increase by an unknown amount. This proposal would also reduce the harvest rate and increase conflicts with the Kasilof River Personal Use set gillnet fishery which operates from June 15 to June 24. However since the Kasilof Sonar generally is not put in until June 15 the likelihood of fishing prior to June 20 would be low. Because the harvests in the tails of the run are small, starting fishing earlier is not likely to offset the effects of the windows and fishing limitations.

BACKGROUND: The Kasilof River biological escapement goal has been exceeded 8 of 9 years. Since 2001, when the current OEG of 150,000 to 300,000 sockeye salmon was established, the OEG has been exceeded 6 of 7 years. The Kasilof River sonar project currently begins June 15 so there is little chance of a fishery prior to June 18 or 20. The Kasilof Section has a 48-hour closed window and 48 hours of additional fishing time each week from the start of the season until July 8. Beginning July 8, closed windows and allowable fishing time are dictated by the Kenai River sockeye salmon return.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. However, the department does support the development of flexible management plans. An earlier starting date is not likely to solve the problem of consistently exceeding the Kasilof River escapement goal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 94: 5 AAC 21.310. Fishing seasons.

PROPOSED BY: Gary Deiman

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow commercial fishing to begin on the first Monday or Thursday period after June 15 in the Kasilof Section.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Kasilof Section opens on June 25 unless the department estimates that 50,000 sockeye salmon are in the Kasilof River before June 25. The department may then open the fishery prior to June 25, but not earlier than June 20.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would open the Kasilof Section earlier in some years, allowing the harvest of earlier run sockeye and king salmon returning to the Kasilof River. The harvest of Kenai River early-run king salmon would increase by an unknown amount. This proposal would also reduce the harvest rate and increase conflicts with the Kasilof River Personal Use set gillnet fishery which operates from June 15 to June 24. However since the Kasilof Sonar generally is not put in until June 15 the likelihood of fishing prior to June 20 would be low. Because the harvests in the tails of the run are small, starting fishing earlier is not likely to offset the effects of the windows and fishing limitations.

BACKGROUND: The Kasilof River biological escapement goal has been exceeded 8 of 9 years. Since 2001, when the current OEG of 150,000 to 300,000 sockeye salmon was established, the OEG has been exceeded 6 of 7 years. The Kasilof River sonar project currently begins June 15 so there is little chance of a fishery prior to June 18 or 20. The Kasilof Section has a 48-hour closed window and 48 hours of additional fishing time each week from the start of the season until July 8. Beginning July 8, closed windows and allowable fishing time are dictated by the Kenai River sockeye salmon return.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. However, the department does support the development of flexible management plans. An earlier starting date is not likely to solve the problem of consistently exceeding the Kasilof River escapement goal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 98: 5 AAC 21.310(b)(3). Fishing seasons.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai Peninsula Fishermen's Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would not allow drift fishermen to fish within two miles of shore once the set gillnet fishery closes in the Kasilof, Kenai, and East Foreland Sections.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? For drift gillnets in the Central District, from the start of the season fishing with drift gillnets may not occur within two miles of the mean high tide mark on the eastern side of the Upper Subdistrict until those locations have been opened for fishing with set gillnets. No part of a commercial drift gillnet or set gillnet may be set or operated within 600 feet of any part of another commercial set gillnet. During the season, if a window or emergency order limitation meant that the set gillnet fishery was not open but the drift fishery was open in the Kenai, Kasilof or east Forelands sections the department closes the drift gillnet fishery within the normally open set gillnet area to provide for an orderly fishery. If however during even years when the drift fleet is fishing for pink salmon after the Upper Subdistrict set gillnets are closed the department has not closed the area normally open to set gillnets.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? The drift gillnet fishery would have a clear open or closed area defined in regulation that would not require an emergency order. Effects would be dependent on fishing time, weather, and the migration patterns of salmon.

BACKGROUND: Prior to 1996, the season closed in the Upper Subdistrict for set gillnets on August 15. After August 15 drift gillnets were not allowed within 5 miles of the eastern shoreline. In 1996, the BOF changed the closing date of the drift fishery to August 9 and the set gillnet fishery to one period after August 10. In 1999 and 2000, the set gillnet closing was changed to August 7. When the drift gillnet fishery closes after the set gillnet fishery, the drift fleet fishes near the beach and can destroy set gillnet buoys and running lines that are left in the water.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on the allocative aspects of this proposal but **SUPPORTS** the BOF clarifying and resolving this issue.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 99: 5 AAC 21.310(b)(3). Fishing seasons.

PROPOSED BY: Jeff Beaudoin

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would not allow drift fishermen to fish within two miles of shore at any time in the Kasilof, Kenai, and East Foreland Sections.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? For drift gillnets in the Central District, from the start of the season fishing with drift gillnets may not occur within two

miles of the mean high tide mark on the eastern side of the Upper Subdistrict until those locations have been opened for fishing with set gillnets. No part of a commercial drift gillnet or set gillnet may be set or operated within 600 feet of any part of another commercial set gillnet. Set gillnets are allowed out to 1.5 miles south of the Kenai River and 1 mile north of the Kenai River. During the season, if a window or emergency order limitation meant that the set gillnet fishery was not open but the drift fishery was open in the Kenai, Kasilof or east Forelands sections the department closes the drift gillnet fishery within the normally open set gillnet area to provide for an orderly fishery. If however during even years when the drift fleet is fishing for pink salmon after the Upper Subdistrict set gillnets are closed the department has not closed the area normally open to set gillnets.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? The drift gillnet fishery would have a clear open or closed area defined in regulation that would not require an emergency order. Effects would be dependent on fishing time, weather, and the migration patterns of salmon.

BACKGROUND: Prior to 1996, the season closed in the Upper Subdistrict for set gillnets on August 15. After August 15 drift gillnets were not allowed within 5 miles of the eastern shoreline. In 1996 the BOF changed the closing date of the drift fishery to August 9 and the set gillnet fishery to one period after August 10. In 1999 ands 2000 the set gillnet closing was changed to August 7. When the drift gillnet fishery closes after the set gillnet fishery the drift fleet fishes near the beach and can destroy set gillnet buoys and running lines that are left in the water.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on the allocative aspects of this proposal but **SUPPORTS** the BOF clarifying and resolving this issue.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

Weekly Fishing Periods

PROPOSAL 90: 5 AAC 21.320. Weekly fishing periods.

PROPOSED BY: Central Peninsula Advisory Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would increase the current regulatory fishing periods after August 10 from two periods per week to three periods per week.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Salmon may be taken in the Northern and Central Districts from 7:00 a.m. Monday until 7:00 p.m. Monday and from 7:00 a.m. Thursday until 7:00 p.m. Thursday. In addition the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery closes on August 10, and the drift fishery is restricted to drift areas three and four after

August 10. In addition there is a directed pink salmon drift fishery during even years that does occur 3 days per week for three periods immediately after August 10.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would increase commercial fishing time from 24 to 36 hours per week. This fishery would likely increase the commercial harvest of sockeye, coho, pink and chum salmon by an unknown amount.

BACKGROUND: At statehood the fishing schedule was often set at three to five days per week, generally in the later half of July. Since 1971 the Upper Cook Inlet fishing schedule has consisted of two weekly fishing periods with adjustments made by emergency order dependant on run strength.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 95: 5 AAC 21.320. Weekly fishing periods.

PROPOSED BY: John Higgins

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would return the regular fishing schedule to Mondays and Fridays instead of Mondays and Thursdays. This change was made in 1999. From 1970 until 1999, the regular schedule was on Mondays and Fridays. Prior to 1970 the fishing schedule was generally 3 days per week.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? In the set gillnet fishery, salmon may be taken in the Northern District from 7:00 a.m. Monday until 7:00 p.m. Monday and from 7:00 a.m. Thursday until 7:00 p.m. Thursday and in the Central District, salmon may be taken from 7:00 a.m. Monday until 7:00 p.m. Monday and from 7:00 a.m. Thursday until 7:00 p.m. Thursday. In the drift gillnet fishery, salmon may be taken in the Central District from 7:00 a.m. Monday until 7:00 p.m. Monday and from 7:00 a.m. Thursday until 7:00 p.m. Thursday. Fishing periods may be modified by emergency order. At run strengths of greater than 2,000,000 sockeye salmon, the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery will be closed for one continuous 36-hour period per week beginning between 7:00 p.m. Thursday and 7:00 a.m. Friday.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? If adopted this change would generally make it more likely to fish additional time on Wednesdays instead of on Saturdays. However, the overall harvest rate is unlikely to change.

BACKGROUND: At statehood the commercial fishery was managed under a flexible schedule, prior to July 1 there were 2 fishing periods per week and up to 5 periods per

week after July 1. In 1961 that was changed to two 24-hour periods per week on Mondays and Thursdays. Between 1966 and 1970 the schedule was again returned to a flexible schedule at mid July, with from 2 to 3 periods per week. In 1970 the fishing schedule was fixed at 2 periods per week on Mondays and Fridays for 12 hours. That remained in effect until 1999 when it was changed to Mondays and Thursdays. There is little difference in the harvest rate except there is the perception of fishing more on weekends with the Monday/Thursday schedule.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 96: 5 AAC 21.320(b)(1). Weekly fishing periods.

PROPOSED BY: Bob Wolfe

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would increase the number of fishing periods in the drift gillnet fishery from two periods to three 12-hour weekly fishing periods. These periods would be on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? In the drift gillnet fishery, salmon may be taken in the Central District from 7:00 a.m. Monday until 7:00 p.m. Monday and from 7:00 a.m. Thursday until 7:00 p.m. Thursday. Fishing periods may be modified by emergency order.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would likely increase the drift fleet harvest and to a lesser extent decrease the set gillnet harvest.

BACKGROUND: The regular period schedule has been two 12-hour periods per week since 1970. From 1970 to 1999, regular periods were on Mondays and Fridays and from 2000 to present they have been on Mondays and Thursdays. Two periods per week has traditionally been the regular period schedule that needed the fewest emergency order adjustments during the season.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 97: 5 AAC 21.320(b)(1). Weekly fishing periods.

PROPOSED BY: United Cook Inlet Drift Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would increase the number of fishing periods in the drift gillnet fishery from two periods to three weekly fishing periods. These periods would be on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. The BOF would establish the period length.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? In the drift gillnet fishery, salmon may be taken in the Central District from 7:00 a.m. Monday until 7:00 p.m. Monday and from 7:00 a.m. Thursday until 7:00 p.m. Thursday. Fishing periods may be modified by emergency order.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would be dependent upon BOF actions. In general, this proposal would likely increase the drift fleet harvest and to a lesser extent decrease the set gillnet harvest.

BACKGROUND: The regular period schedule has been two 12-hour periods per week since 1970. From 1970 to 1999, regular periods were on Mondays and Fridays and from 2000 to present they have been on Mondays and Thursdays. Two periods per week has traditionally been the regular period schedule that needed the fewest emergency order adjustments during the season.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

Gear

PROPOSAL 110: 5 AAC 21.330. Gear

PROPOSED BY: Liz Chase

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow any Cook Inlet gillnet limited entry permit holder to substitute a reef net for gillnet gear for live fish harvest.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Currently only gillnets and seines are allowed in Upper Cook Inlet. Reef nets are not legal gear anywhere in the state.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Effects of this proposal would be dependent on BOF actions.

BACKGROUND: CFEC has established an optimum number of permits based on gillnet gear. A change would likely require another study by CFEC.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **OPPOSED** to this proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department believes that the adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery. Costs would be associated with new gear and equipment.

PROPOSAL 78: 5 AAC 21.330. Gear.

PROPOSED BY: Mike Carpenter

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would open the south side of Chinitna Bay to set gillnetting during regular periods.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current set gillnet fishing area in the Chinitna Bay Subdistrict is along the north side of Chinitna Bay from 59 degrees 53.17' N. lat., 153 degrees W. long., to 59 degrees 51.52' N. lat., 153 degrees 08.17' W. long. and only within 2,500 feet of the mean high tide mark.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? If this area is opened harvest would likely be small/minor and comprised of primarily chum as well as some coho salmon. Gear conflicts with seine and drift currently fishing this area could result.

BACKGROUND: The south side of Chinitna Bay would be open for set gillnets. Currently this area is open to drift gillnets and seines, only by emergency order. Harvests in Chinitna Bay are currently almost non-existent because there is currently no tender service from any processor. The only stock with an escapement goal in this area is chums in Clearwater Creek. This goal is currently being exceeded most years. For approximately 30 years the current open set gillnet area has been in effect. It was arrived at as a compromise between users as a means of ending a long-standing gear dispute. The persons involved in this dispute are no longer involved in the fishery.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

Gillnet specifications and operations

PROPOSAL 102: 5 AAC 21.331 (h). Gillnet specifications and operations.

PROPOSED BY: Bruce Gabrys

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would continue to allow the use of monofilament mesh by deleting the sunset provision and triple the useable amount of monofilament mesh web allowed in the fishery.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? In the Cook Inlet Area, fishermen may use up to 50 fathoms of monofilament mesh web in a drift gillnet or up to 35 fathoms of monofilament mesh web in a set gillnet(one third of legal amount). Before a person uses monofilament, they must register with the department. If the use of monofilament mesh web is causing an adverse effect, the department may disallow its use. This regulation had a sunset clause as of December 31, 2007 and no longer applies.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? It is unclear what the differences in harvest between multi-filament and monofilament have been since the 2005 Board of Fisheries meeting. Personal contacts of commercial fishermen who used monofilament indicated there was little middle ground. Either fishermen liked it or disliked it.

BACKGROUND: Monofilament gillnets are used to harvest salmon in Puget Sound, the Columbia River, and California. Neither Alaska nor British Columbia allows them to be used to harvest salmon. Monofilament web is used in the Alaska herring gillnet fisheries. There were several discussion topics when the first proposal was discussed at the 2005 Board of Fisheries meeting. The cost of monofilament is approximately 30-40% cheaper than currently legal multifilament web. A catch efficiency study completed in Southeast Alaska by the department shows that there was a general increase in catch efficiency for pink salmon associated with a decrease in the number of filaments. It also showed that six strand and monofilament web increased the harvest of chum and coho salmon taken in clear water, but not in turbid water. Finally, no significant differences were found for sockeye salmon. Opinion of gillnet suppliers in 2005 was that the difference in efficiency between monofilament and the current legal multifilament would be relatively insignificant.

Two other biological issues were in regards to dropouts and biodegradability. These are salmon that escape, either alive or dead, from gillnets after having been entangled. It was the personal view of the gear suppliers that monofilament gear can be expected to have a higher drop out rate, especially in rough weather, than multifilament gear. No studies could be found comparing the rate of drop out of monofilament gillnet web compared to the current Alaska legal multifilament web. Concerning biodegradability, multifilament nets used in Alaska are manufactured with the same material and the rate of decay between the current legal nets and monofilament nets would not differ significantly.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. If this proposal were to pass, the department would want to maintain its current ability to

disallow its use if it is causing an adverse effect. If the BOF passes this regulation, the need to close and reopen the fishery by emergency order should be removed.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 103: 5 AAC 21.331 (h). Gillnet specifications and operations.

PROPOSED BY: Teague Vanek

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would increase the useable amount of monofilament mesh web from 1/3 of the allowable aggregate length to all of it. For set gillnets it would increase to 105 fathoms and for drift it would increase to 150 fathoms.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? In the Cook Inlet Area, fishermen may use up to 50 fathoms of monofilament mesh web in a drift gillnet or up to 35 fathoms of monofilament mesh web in a set gillnet. Before a person uses monofilament, they must register with the department. If the use of monofilament mesh web is causing an adverse effect, the department may disallow its use. This regulation had a sunset clause as of December 31, 2007 and no longer applies.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? It is unclear what the differences in harvest between multi-filament and monofilament have been since the 2005 Board of Fisheries meeting. Personal contacts of commercial fishermen found it is either loved or despised with little middle ground.

BACKGROUND: Monofilament gillnets are used to harvest salmon in Puget Sound, the Columbia River, and California. Neither Alaska nor British Columbia allows them to be used to harvest salmon. Monofilament web is used in the Alaska herring gillnet fisheries. There were several discussion topics when the first proposal was discussed at the 2005 Board of Fisheries meeting. The cost of monofilament is approximately 30-40% cheaper that currently legal multifilament web. As far as catch efficiency, a study completed in Southeast Alaska by the department shows that there was a general increase in catch efficiency for pink salmon associated with a decrease in the number of filaments. It also showed that six strand and monofilament web increased the harvest of chum and coho salmon taken in clear water, but not in turbid water. Finally, no significant differences were found for sockeye salmon. Opinion of gillnet suppliers in 2005 was that the difference in efficiency between monofilament and the current legal multifilament would be relatively insignificant.

Two other biological issues were in regards to dropouts and biodegradability. These are salmon that escape, either alive or dead, from gillnets after having been entangled. It was the personal view of the gear suppliers that monofilament gear can be expected to have a higher drop out rate, especially in rough weather, than multifilament gear. No studies

could be found comparing the rate of drop out of monofilament gillnet web compared to the current Alaska legal multifilament web. Concerning biodegradability, multifilament nets used in Alaska are manufactured with the same material and the rate of decay between the current legal nets and monofilament nets would not differ significantly.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. If this proposal were to pass, the department would want to maintain its current ability to disallow its use if it is causing an adverse effect. If the BOF passes this regulation, the need to close and reopen the fishery by emergency order should be removed.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 104: 5 AAC 21.331 (h). Gillnet specifications and operations.

PROPOSED BY: South K-Beach Independent Fishermen's Alliance

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would disallow the use monofilament mesh web in Upper Cook Inlet.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? In the Cook Inlet Area, fishermen may use up to 50 fathoms of monofilament mesh web in a drift gillnet or up to 35 fathoms of monofilament mesh web in a set gillnet. Before a person uses monofilament, they must register with the department. If the use of monofilament mesh web is causing an adverse effect, the department may disallow its use. This regulation had a sunset clause as of December 31, 2007 and no longer applies.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Legal gear would return to multifilament gear only. It is unclear what the differences in harvest between multi-filament and monofilament have been since the 2005 Board of Fisheries meeting.

BACKGROUND: Monofilament gillnets are used to harvest salmon in Puget Sound, the Columbia River, and California. Neither Alaska nor British Columbia allows them to be used to harvest salmon. Monofilament web is used in the Alaska herring gillnet fisheries. There were several discussion topics when the first proposal was discussed at the 2005 Board of Fisheries meeting. The cost of monofilament is approximately 30-40% cheaper that currently legal multifilament web. As far as catch efficiency, a study completed in Southeast Alaska by the department shows that there was a general increase in catch efficiency for pink salmon associated with a decrease in the number of filaments. It also showed that six strand and monofilament web increased the harvest of chum and coho salmon taken in clear water, but not in turbid water. Finally, no significant differences were found for sockeye salmon. Opinion of gillnet suppliers in 2005 was that the difference in efficiency between monofilament and the current legal multifilament would be relatively insignificant.

Two other biological issues were in regards to dropouts and biodegradability. These are salmon that escape, either alive or dead, from gillnets after having been entangled. It was the personal view of the gear suppliers that monofilament gear can be expected to have a higher drop out rate, especially in rough weather, than multifilament gear. No studies could be found comparing the rate of drop out of monofilament gillnet web compared to the current Alaska legal multifilament web. Concerning biodegradability, multifilament nets used in Alaska are manufactured with the same material and the rate of decay between the current legal nets and monofilament nets would not differ significantly.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 105: 5 AAC 21.331(c). Gillnet specifications and operations.

PROPOSED BY: Bob Wolfe

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would increase the legal length of drift gillnets from 150 fathoms to 200 fathoms.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? A drift gillnet may not be more than 150 fathoms in length and 45 meshes in depth.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would increase the harvest in drift gillnets by an unknown amount. There would likely be an increase in sockeye harvests to some degree, but there would also be an increase in other species as well.

BACKGROUND: Legal gear for drifting has been 150 fathoms since this gear type was introduced into Cook Inlet.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department believes that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 106: 5 AAC 21.331(c). Gillnet specifications and operations.

PROPOSED BY: Bruce Gabrys

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would increase the maximum drift gillnet depth allowance from 45 mesh to 60 mesh in depth.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? A drift gillnet may not be more than 150 fathoms in length and 45 meshes in depth.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would increase the harvest in drift gillnets by an unknown amount. There would likely be an increase in sockeye harvests to some degree, but there would also be an increase in other species as well.

BACKGROUND: Legal gear has always been 150 fathoms and 45 meshes in depth.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department believes that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 107: 5 AAC 21.331. Gillnet specifications and operations.

PROPOSED BY: Brent M. Western

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow two Cook Inlet drift gillnet CFEC permit holders to jointly operate up to 200 fathoms of drift gillnet gear from the same vessel. Permit holders fishing in this manner would be required to register with the department. It would also require the vessel operating under this manner to be identified as such.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Two permit holders can fish from one boat using the allowable amount of gear. In this instance, a permit holder can act as a helper for the permit holder of the vessel. Pertaining to gear, a drift gillnet may not be more than 150 fathoms in length and 45 meshes in depth. This proposal seeks to institute a regulation patterned after the regulation (5 AAC 06.333) which is currently legal in Bristol Bay.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal may increase the efficiency by co-op permit holders by approximately 30 percent during some fishing periods. However many of the boats in the fleet would be unable to carry 200 fathoms or have the ability to fish that much gear. The overall effect of this proposal would depend on how many permit holders took advantage of the regulation. The increase in net length may increase the commercial harvest of salmon by an unknown amount.

BACKGROUND: Legal gear for drifting has been 150 fathoms since this gear type was introduced into Cook Inlet.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 108: 5 AAC 21.331(d). Gillnet specifications and operations.

PROPOSED BY: South K-Beach Independent Fishermen's Alliance

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would increase the aggregate set gillnet length from 105 fathoms to 140 fathoms in length.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? A person may not operate more than four set gillnets with more than 105 fathoms of set gillnet in the aggregate, except that on Fire Island a person may operate more than four set gillnets, but the aggregate length of the nets may not exceed 105 fathoms.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would increase the harvest in drift gillnets by an unknown amount. There would likely be an increase in sockeye harvests to some degree, but there would also be an increase in other species as well.

BACKGROUND Legal gear for set gillnetting has been 105 fathoms in the aggregate since before statehood.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department believes that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 109: 5 AAC 21.331. Gillnet specifications and operations. (5 AAC 39.250. Gillnet specifications and operations should be the cited regulation)

PROPOSED BY: Melvin Forsyth Jr.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would change the gillnet web specifications in Upper Cook Inlet set gillnets to contain three strands or less instead of at least six strands.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Gillnet web in Cook Inlet must contain at least 30 filaments and all filaments must be of equal diameter, or the web must contain at least six filaments, each of which must be at least 0.20 millimeter in diameter. In addition, the BOF has allowed for up to 35 fathoms of monofilament gear to be used since 2005 on an experimental basis by emergency order.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposed regulation is unclear as to what strand size should be used. Given that, it is also unclear what the effects would be in the commercial fishery. It appears that this proposal seeks to institute weaker nets that king salmon could break through, however this three strand net proposal would not be effective in doing so. If substantially weaker net breakage occurs, this could reduce the ability of set gillnets to catch sockeye salmon and increase dropouts rates.

BACKGROUND: Upper Cook Inlet king salmon stocks are relatively stable. The Kenai and Kasilof rivers contain both early and late-run king salmon that support major sport fisheries. Escapements for the Kenai River stocks have consistently been met or have exceeded spawning escapement goals. The Kasilof early-run king salmon have met or exceeded spawning escapement needs recently.

Since 1999, the Kenai River sockeye salmon in-river run goal has been exceeded 5 of 9 years and within the goal four times. During that same time period, the Kenai River was below the optimum escapement goal (OEG) twice, within the OEG four times, and was exceeded three times. The Kasilof River biological escapement goal has been exceeded 8 of 9 years. Since 2001, when the current OEG of 150,000 to 300,000 sockeye salmon was established, the OEG has been exceeded 6 of 7 years.

Tides in Upper Cook Inlet are some of the strongest in the world. If gillnet webbing is reduced in size or number of filaments, substantial net breakage would occur, being costly to fishermen.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **OPPOSED** this proposal. Three strand gear is not allowed statewide, and only in Upper Cook Inlet, monofilament gear may be used on an experimental basis. Dropout rates for all species may also increase.

COST STATEMENT: The department believes that approval of this proposal will result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery. If this proposal passes, all gillnet gear would have to be replaced.

PROPOSAL 111: 5 AAC 21.331. Gillnet specifications and operations.

PROPOSED BY: Melvin Forsyth Jr.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would not allow set gillnet fishermen to fish within 600 feet offshore from mean high tide.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? In the Upper Subdistrict set gillnets are allowed from shore out to 1.5 miles from shore south of the Kenai River and out to one mile north of the Kenai River.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would eliminate the most productive sites in the fishery and decrease the harvest of salmon by set gillnet fishermen, which would likely increase the need for additional commercial fishing time.

BACKGROUND: Upper Cook Inlet king salmon stocks are relatively stable. The Kenai and Kasilof rivers contain both early and late-run king salmon that support sport fisheries. Escapements for the Kenai River stocks have consistently been met or have exceeded spawning escapement goals. The Kasilof early-run king salmon have met or exceeded spawning escapement needs recently.

Since 1999 the Kenai River late run sockeye salmon in-river run goal has been exceeded 5 of 9 years and within the goal four times. During that same time period, the Kenai River was below the optimum escapement goal (OEG) twice, within the OEG four times, and was exceeded three times. The Kasilof River biological escapement goal has been exceeded 8 of 9 years. Since 2001, when the current OEG of 150,000 to 300,000 sockeye salmon was established, the OEG has been exceeded 6 of 7 years.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal as it would hinder the ability to manage for sockeye salmon escapement goals.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

Registration

PROPOSAL 112: 5 AAC 21.345. Registration.

PROPOSED BY: Gary Deiman

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow set gillnet fishermen to move between areas in Upper Cook Inlet after a 48-hour waiting period.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Set gillnet fishermen must register for one of three areas – Upper Subdistrict, the Northern District, or the Greater Cook Inlet Area. Once registered for an area, they cannot fish in any of the other areas during that season.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Set gillnet fishermen could fish in multiple areas during a season. This would potentially allow a

fisherman to move to another area where fishing was better, or to extend their season by fishing the early or late time periods in another area. Anticipated harvest rates and participation used to manage fisheries would be more difficult to predict. This proposal may increase the commercial harvest of salmon by an unknown amount.

BACKGROUND: Area registration for set gillnets went into effect in 1993 in order to prevent fishermen from moving into "hot" fishing areas at the peak of the season and then returning to their original area for the remainder of the season. At the time it was implemented, it was aimed primarily at reducing the influx of set gillnets into the Upper Subdistrict or Upper Subdistrict fishermen into the Northern District king and Big River sockeye fisheries.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 113: 5 AAC 39.120. Registration of commercial fishing vessels.

PROPOSED BY: Gary W. Jackinsky

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would eliminate area registration for vessels in Upper Cook Inlet and Kodiak.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Under regulation 5 AAC 39.120 a vessel can only be used in one registration area of the state. In addition under 5 AAC 39.115 a person who holds more than one permit must designate "the single area in which he desires to salmon net fish in that year."

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would allow fishermen in Kodiak and Cook Inlet to use a single vessel.

BACKGROUND: Area registration for vessels went into effect before 1982 in order to prevent fishermen and vessels from moving between fishing areas in order to spread out the "wealth".

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

Policy for Sustainable Salmon Fisheries

PROPOSAL 119: 5 AAC 39.222. Policy for the management of sustainable salmon fisheries; 5 AAC 21.358. Northern District Salmon Management Plan; and 5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Bruce Knowles

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would identify Susitna River and Fish Creek sockeye salmon as stocks with a yield concern under the Policy for Management of Sustainable Salmon and create a conservation corridor for the drift fleet.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The escapement goal for Fish Creek is 20,000 to 70,000 sockeye salmon. The escapement goal for Yentna River is 90,000 to 160,000 sockeye salmon. Achievement of the lower end of the Yentna River optimal escapement goal shall take priority over not exceeding the upper end of the Kenai River escapement goal. When the sockeye salmon returns to the Kenai River are four million or greater, the optimal escapement goal is 75,000 to 180,000 sockeye salmon in the Yentna River.

The purpose of the Northern District management plan is to minimize the harvest of coho salmon bound for the Northern District of upper Cook Inlet and to provide the department direction for management of salmon stocks. The department shall manage the chum, pink, and sockeye salmon stocks primarily for commercial uses to provide commercial fisherman with an economic yield from the harvest of these salmon resources based on abundance. The department shall also manage the chum, pink, and sockeye salmon stocks to minimize the harvest of Northern District coho salmon, to provide sport and guided sport fisherman a reasonable opportunity to harvest these salmon resources over the entire run, as measured by the frequency of inriver restrictions, or as specified in this section and other regulations.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would result in the department creating an action plan and presenting it to the board for consideration. Effects would depend what restrictions or other actions the BOF implemented.

BACKGROUND: There are no stocks designated as a yield concern in Cook Inlet nor is the department recommending any. The Fish Creek sockeye salmon goal has been exceeded twice, within three times, and below once in the last 6 years. The Yentna River sockeye salmon goal has been exceeded once, within once, and below four times in the last 6 years. Since the last Board of Fisheries meeting, the department has used a suite of restrictions and closures of the drift fleet and Northern Cook Inlet set netters in endeavoring to achieve escapement goals in Northern Cook Inlet.

The department is just completing the second year of a three year tagging study in the Susitna River drainage to estimate total sockeye salmon spawner abundance. In addition, we are operating a series of weirs and conducting lake studies to ascertain if and where production is changing. The department also has conducted a three year genetics study to

delineate the harvest in the commercial fishery of these stocks. Results from all of these programs are not yet available, but will be by the BOF meeting in February. In Fish Creek, 70-80 percent of the return each year is of hatchery origin. Even the survival of these hatchery fish is far lower than normal.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. Neither Fish Creek nor the Yentna River sockeye salmon stocks meets the criteria in 5 AAC 39.222 to consider them stocks of concern.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 120: 5 AAC 39.222. Policy for the management of sustainable salmon fisheries.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai River Sportfishing Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would designate Cook Inlet chum salmon as a Stock of Concern.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The purpose of the Northern District management plan is to minimize the harvest of coho salmon bound for the Northern District of upper Cook Inlet and to provide the department direction for management of salmon stocks. The department shall manage the chum, pink, and sockeye salmon stocks primarily for commercial uses to provide commercial fisherman with an economic yield from the harvest of these salmon resources based on abundance. The department shall also manage the chum, pink, and sockeye salmon stocks to minimize the harvest of Northern District coho salmon, to provide sport and guided sport fisherman a reasonable opportunity to harvest these salmon resources over the entire run, as measured by the frequency of inriver restrictions, or as specified in this section and other regulations.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would result in the department creating an action plan and presenting it to the board for consideration. Effects would depend what restrictions or other actions the BOF implemented.

BACKGROUND: This proposal has been before the BOF at each of the last four meetings and been rejected. In 2001 and 2002 the department conducted a tagging study in the lower inlet to estimate the number of pink, chum and coho salmon returning to UCI. Results of that study indicated the exploitation rate in the commercial fishery of chum salmon was approximately 6 percent. Acceptable exploitation rates are in the 60-70 percent range. With this low exploitation rate, commercial harvest rates are not an issue. In addition the only stream with an established escapement goal is Clearwater Creek. There is generally no fishery on this stock until the escapement goal is achieved and the escapement goal has been consistently met or exceeded.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. The Clearwater Creek chum salmon stock does not meet the criteria in 5 AAC 39.222 to consider it a stock of concern. Chum stocks in the remainder of Cook Inlet are relatively healthy.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

COMMITTEE B: Northern District Salmon Management Plans (CF) (Total proposals: 46)

Big River Sockeye: 152, 100, 101
Northern District King Salmon Mgmt Plan: 146, 147, 150, 148, 149, 151
Northern District Salmon Mgmt Plan: 121, 122, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 123
Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Mgmt Plan: 114, 124, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 115, 116, 117, 125, 133
Central District Drift Gillnet Mgmt. Plan: 160, 161, 162, 89, 163, 164, 165, 91

Big River Sockeye

PROPOSAL 152: 5 AAC 21.368. Big River Sockeye Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Richard Thompson

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow drift gillnets to be used to harvest sockeye salmon taken in the Big River Sockeye Salmon Fishery. It would also open the season one month earlier, allowing two gillnets instead if one, and increase the allowable king salmon harvest from 1,000 to 1,500. It would also allow nets to move offshore to the off shore boundary of the Kustatan Subdistrict and establish an exploitation rate of 40 percent.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The purpose of this management plan is to authorize a harvest of Big River sockeye salmon by set gillnets in a portion of the Kustatan and Kalgin Island Subdistricts. The open fishing season is from June 1 through June 24 and fishing periods are from 7:00 a.m. through 7:00 p.m. on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Salmon may be taken by set gillnets only that do not exceed 35 fathoms in length nor five and one-half inches in mesh size and may not operate more than one set gillnet at a time. The fishery shall close when the harvest of king salmon reaches 1,000 fish.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would likely increase the harvest of sockeye and king salmon bound for Big River, depending on how much effort increased. Commercial fishing opportunity would likely be reduced if current harvest rates increased with the additional participation.

BACKGROUND: The Big River king fishery began in 1989. Since area registration began in 1992, effort has been fairly small with only 6 –15 permit holders participating. Harvests have averaged 450 king salmon and 5,300 sockeye salmon each year.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 100: **5 AAC 21.310. Fishing seasons.; and 5 AAC 21.320. Weekly fishing periods.**

PROPOSED BY: Henry Kroll

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow commercial fishing in a portion of the Western Subdistrict to begin 4 weeks earlier on May 15 with a single net and a 1,000 king salmon harvest cap.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? In the Western Subdistrict commercial fishing is allowed from June 16 until closed by emergency order. Fishing periods are from 7:00 a.m. Monday until 7:00 p.m. Monday and from 7:00 a.m. Thursday until 7:00 p.m. Thursday. Fishing periods may be modified by emergency order.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Additional harvest of Crescent River king and sockeye salmon stocks earlier in the season would occur. Other stocks of early returning fish would also be harvested.

BACKGROUND: There are currently two early season commercial fisheries. The Big River area, including the west side Kalgin Island opens for Monday, Wednesday and Friday periods beginning June 1. The Northern District king fishery opens on May 25 for a single Monday fishing period each week for three weeks. Both of these fisheries have a single net provision.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 101: **5 AAC 21.310. Fishing seasons.; and 5 AAC 21.320. Weekly fishing periods.**

PROPOSED BY: Jennifer J. Porter

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow commercial fishing in a portion of the Western Subdistrict to begin 4 weeks earlier on May 15 with a single net and a 2,000 king cap.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? In the Western Subdistrict commercial fishing is allowed from June 16 until closed by emergency order. Fishing periods are from 7:00 a.m. Monday until 7:00 p.m. Monday and from 7:00 a.m. Thursday until 7:00 p.m. Thursday. Fishing periods may be modified by emergency order.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Additional harvest of Crescent River king and sockeye salmon stocks earlier in the season would occur. Other stocks of early returning fish would also be harvested.

BACKGROUND: There are currently two early season commercial fisheries. The Big River area, including the west side Kalgin Island opens for Monday, Wednesday and Friday periods beginning June 1. The Northern District king fishery opens on May 25 for a single Monday fishing period each week for three weeks. Both of these fisheries have a single net provision.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

Northern District King Salmon Management Plan

PROPOSAL 146: 5 AAC 21.366 (1). Northern District King Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Northern District Set Netters Association of Cook Inlet

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would remove the three period limit and allow king salmon fishing to occur each Monday from May 25 to June 24, unless closed earlier by emergency order.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Northern District king salmon commercial fishing season begins on the first Monday on or after May 25 and closes June 24, unless closed earlier by emergency order. Fishing periods are from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Mondays only for three periods except in the area from an ADF&G regulatory marker located one mile south of the Theodore River to the Susitna River is open to fishing for the second regular Monday period only. During this fishery the harvest may not exceed 12,500 king salmon. Set gillnets may not exceed 35 fathoms in length and six inches in mesh size and only a single set gillnet is allowed. If any one of Theodore, Lewis, Ivan, Deshka, or Chuitna Rivers is closed to sport fishing, area restrictions to the commercial king salmon fishery in the Northern District are required.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? The harvest of northern bound king salmon would increase. The number of permit holders participating in this fishery may also increase. The allowable harvest would remain at 12,500 king salmon, and the fishery would be closed when that cap is reached.

BACKGROUND: The Northern District King Salmon Management Plan was first adopted in 1986. In 2002, a limit of 3 periods was put in place and the fishery opened on Mondays after May 25 instead of June 1. Restrictions to fishing around the Theodore and Chuitna Rivers were implemented in 1997 in response to low escapements in those streams. This area is now open for a single period. The king salmon harvest has not met the 12,500 harvest cap since 1986. This is due in large part to the declining participation in this fishery, not due to a decline in the northern bound king salmon runs.

Prior to 2007, king salmon escapements into the Deshka River have been relatively strong, exceeding the upper range of the biological escapement goal (13,000 – 28,000) for several years. Since 2001, the Deshka River king salmon escapement goal has been met twice and exceeded 5 times, with 2004 being the record (57,934). Because of the projected larger runs, the department has also issued emergency orders, liberalizing sport fishing in recent years prior to the opening date of the season. The 2007 Deshka River king salmon escapement was approximately 18,000 fish.

The outlook for the 2008 Deshka River king salmon run is far below average, with a projected total run of 20,300 fish. This is below the 1979-2007 average run of 38,700 fish. Management actions may be necessary to reduce sport harvest in an effort to achieve the escapement goal.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 147: 5 AAC 21.366 (2). Northern District King Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Northern District Set Netters Association of Cook Inlet

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow two periods per week instead of one currently in regulation and would also remove the three period limit and allow king salmon fishing to occur each Monday and Thursday from May 25 to June 24, unless closed earlier by emergency order.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Northern District king salmon commercial fishing season begins on the first Monday on or after May 25 and closes June 24, unless closed earlier by emergency order. Fishing periods are from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Mondays only for three periods except in the area from an ADF&G regulatory marker located one mile south of the Theodore River to the Susitna River is open to fishing for the second regular Monday period only. During this fishery the harvest may not exceed 12,500 king salmon. Set gillnets may not exceed 35 fathoms in length and six inches in mesh size and only a single set gillnet is allowed. If any one of Theodore,

Lewis, Ivan, Deshka, or Chuitna Rivers is closed to sport fishing, area restrictions to the commercial king salmon fishery in the Northern District are required.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? The harvest of northern bound king salmon would increase. The number of permit holders participating in this fishery may also increase. The allowable harvest would remain at 12,500 king salmon, and the fishery would be closed when that cap is reached.

BACKGROUND: The Northern District King Salmon Management Plan was first adopted in 1986. In 2002, a limit of 3 periods was put in place and the fishery opened on Mondays after May 25 instead of June 1. Restrictions to fishing around the Theodore and Chuitna Rivers were implemented in 1997 in response to low escapements in those streams. This area is now open for a single period. The king salmon harvest has not met the 12,500 harvest cap since 1986. This is due in large part to the declining participation in this fishery, not due to a decline in the northern bound king salmon runs.

Prior to 2007, king salmon escapements into the Deshka River have been relatively strong, exceeding the upper range of the biological escapement goal (13,000 – 28,000) for several years. Since 2001, the Deshka River king salmon escapement goal has been met twice and exceeded 5 times, with 2004 being the record (57,934). Because of the projected larger runs, the department has also issued emergency orders, liberalizing sport fishing in recent years prior to the opening date of the season. The 2007 Deshka River king salmon escapement was approximately 18,000 fish.

The outlook for the 2008 Deshka River king salmon run is far below average, with a projected total run of 20,300 fish. This is below the 1979-2007 average run of 38,700 fish. Management actions may be necessary to reduce sport harvest in an effort to achieve the escapement goal.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 150: 5 AAC 21.366. Northern District King Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Rick Jewell

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow two periods per week instead of one currently in regulation and would also remove the three period limit and allow king salmon fishing to occur each Monday and Friday from May 25 to June 24, unless closed earlier by emergency order.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Northern District king salmon commercial fishing season begins on the first Monday on or after May 25 and closes June 24, unless closed earlier by emergency order. Fishing periods are from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Mondays only for three periods except in the area from an ADF&G regulatory marker located one mile south of the Theodore River to the Susitna River is open to fishing for the second regular Monday period only. During this fishery the harvest may not exceed 12,500 king salmon. Set gillnets may not exceed 35 fathoms in length and six inches in mesh size and only a single set gillnet is allowed. If any one of Theodore, Lewis, Ivan, Deshka, or Chuitna Rivers is closed to sport fishing, area restrictions to the commercial king salmon fishery in the Northern District are required.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? The harvest of northern bound king salmon would increase. The number of permit holders participating in this fishery may also increase. The allowable harvest would remain at 12,500 king salmon, and the fishery would be closed when that cap is reached.

BACKGROUND: The Northern District King Salmon Management Plan was first adopted in 1986. In 2002, a limit of 3 periods was put in place and the fishery opened on Mondays after May 25 instead of June 1. Restrictions to fishing around the Theodore and Chuitna Rivers were implemented in 1997 in response to low escapements in those streams. This area is now open for a single period. The king salmon harvest has not met the 12,500 harvest cap since 1986. This is due in large part to the declining participation in this fishery, not due to a decline in the northern bound king salmon runs.

Prior to 2007, king salmon escapements into the Deshka River have been relatively strong, exceeding the upper range of the biological escapement goal (13,000 – 28,000) for several years. Since 2001, the Deshka River king salmon escapement goal has been met twice and exceeded 5 times, with 2004 being the record (57,934). Because of the projected larger runs, the department has also issued emergency orders, liberalizing sport fishing in recent years prior to the opening date of the season. The 2007 Deshka River king salmon escapement was approximately 18,000 fish.

The outlook for the 2008 Deshka River king salmon run is far below average, with a projected total run of 20,300 fish. This is below the 1979-2007 average run of 38,700 fish. Management actions may be necessary to reduce sport harvest in an effort to achieve the escapement goal.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 148: 5 AAC 21.366 (4). Northern District King Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Northern District Set Netters Association of Cook Inlet

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would increase the allowable mesh size from six inches to eight inches for the Northern District king salmon fishery.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Northern District king salmon commercial fishing season begins on the first Monday on or after May 25 and closes June 24, unless closed earlier by emergency order. Fishing periods are from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Mondays only for three periods except in the area from an ADF&G regulatory marker located one mile south of the Theodore River to the Susitna River is open to fishing for the second regular Monday period only. During this fishery the harvest may not exceed 12,500 king salmon. Set gillnets may not exceed 35 fathoms in length and six inches in mesh size and only a single set gillnet is allowed. If any one of Theodore, Lewis, Ivan, Deshka, or Chuitna Rivers is closed to sport fishing, area restrictions to the commercial king salmon fishery in the Northern District are required.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? The harvest of northern bound king salmon would increase. The number of permit holders participating in this fishery may also increase. The allowable harvest would remain at 12,500 king salmon, and the fishery would be closed when that cap is reached.

BACKGROUND: The Northern District King Salmon Management Plan was first adopted in 1986. In 2002, a limit of 3 periods was put in place and the fishery opened on Mondays after May 25 instead of June 1. Restrictions to fishing around the Theodore and Chuitna Rivers were implemented in 1997 in response to low escapements in those streams. This area is now open for a single period. The king salmon harvest has not met the 12,500 harvest cap since 1986. This is due in large part to the declining participation in this fishery, not due to a decline in the northern bound king salmon runs.

Prior to 2007, king salmon escapements into the Deshka River have been relatively strong, exceeding the upper range of the biological escapement goal (13,000 – 28,000) for several years. Since 2001, the Deshka River king salmon escapement goal has been met twice and exceeded 5 times, with 2004 being the record (57,934). Because of the projected larger runs, the department has also issued emergency orders, liberalizing sport fishing in recent years prior to the opening date of the season. The 2007 Deshka River king salmon escapement was approximately 18,000 fish.

The outlook for the 2008 Deshka River king salmon run is far below average, with a projected total run of 20,300 fish. This is below the 1979-2007 average run of 38,700 fish. Management actions may be necessary to reduce sport harvest in an effort to achieve the escapement goal.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 149: 5 AAC 21.366 (8). Northern District King Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Northern District Set Netters Association of Cook Inlet

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would delete the current restrictions to fishing around the Theodore and Chuitna Rivers for only one period, and allow commercial fishing in this area when the remainder of the Northern District is open.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Northern District king salmon commercial fishing season begins on the first Monday on or after May 25 and closes June 24, unless closed earlier by emergency order. Fishing periods are from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Mondays only for three periods except in the area from an ADF&G regulatory marker located one mile south of the Theodore River to the Susitna River is open to fishing for the second regular Monday period only. During this fishery the harvest may not exceed 12,500 king salmon. Set gillnets may not exceed 35 fathoms in length and six inches in mesh size and only a single set gillnet is allowed. If any one of Theodore, Lewis, Ivan, Deshka, or Chuitna Rivers is closed to sport fishing, area restrictions to the commercial king salmon fishery in the Northern District are required.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? The harvest of northern bound king salmon would increase. The number of permit holders participating in this fishery may also increase. The allowable harvest would remain at 12,500 king salmon, and the fishery would be closed when that cap is reached.

BACKGROUND: The Northern District King Salmon Management Plan was first adopted in 1986. In 2002, a limit of 3 periods was put in place and the fishery opened on Mondays after May 25 instead of June 1. Restrictions to fishing around the Theodore and Chuitna Rivers were implemented in 1997 in response to low escapements in those streams. This area is now open for a single period. The king salmon harvest has not met the 12,500 harvest cap since 1986. This is due in large part to the declining participation in this fishery, not due to a decline in the northern bound king salmon runs.

Prior to 2007, king salmon escapements into the Deshka River have been relatively strong, exceeding the upper range of the biological escapement goal (13,000 – 28,000) for several years. Since 2001, the Deshka River king salmon escapement goal has been met twice and exceeded 5 times, with 2004 being the record (57,934). Because of the projected larger runs, the department has also issued emergency orders, liberalizing sport fishing in recent years prior to the opening date of the season. The 2007 Deshka River king salmon escapement was approximately 18,000 fish.

The outlook for the 2008 Deshka River king salmon run is far below average, with a projected total run of 20,300 fish. This is below the 1979-2007 average run of 38,700 fish. Management actions may be necessary to reduce sport harvest in an effort to achieve the escapement goal.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 151: 5 AAC 21.366. Northern District King Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Richard Thompson

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow drift gillnets to be used to harvest Northern District king salmon during regular scheduled periods on the west side of the Northern District. The legal gear would be 2/3 of the normal amount of gear, 100 fathoms instead of 150 fathoms, and the mesh size would not change.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Current regulations do not allow drift gillnets to participate in the Northern District this fishery. The Northern District king salmon commercial fishing season begins on the first Monday on or after May 25 and closes after three periods or June 24, unless closed earlier by emergency order. Fishing periods are from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Mondays and the harvest may not exceed 12,500 king salmon. Set gillnets are the only legal gear and may not exceed 35 fathoms in length and six inches in mesh size. From May 25 through June 24, the area from an ADF&G regulatory marker located one mile south of the Theodore River to the Susitna River is open to fishing the second regular Monday period only. If any one of Theodore, Lewis, Ivan, Deshka, or Chuitna Rivers is closed to sport fishing, area restrictions to the commercial king salmon fishery in the Northern District are required.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? The harvest of northern bound king salmon would increase. The number of permit holders participating in this fishery may also increase. The allowable harvest would remain at 12,500 king salmon, and the fishery would be closed when that cap is reached.

BACKGROUND: The Northern District King Salmon Management Plan was first adopted in 1986. In 2002, a limit of 3 periods was put in place and the fishery opened on Mondays after May 25 instead of June 1. Restrictions to fishing around the Theodore and Chuitna Rivers were implemented in 1997 in response to low escapements in those streams. This area is now open for a single period. The king salmon harvest has not met the 12,500 harvest cap since 1986. This is due in large part to the declining participation in this fishery, not due to a decline in the northern bound king salmon runs.

Prior to 2007, king salmon escapements into the Deshka River have been relatively strong, exceeding the upper range of the biological escapement goal (13,000 – 28,000) for several years. Since 2001, the Deshka River king salmon escapement goal has been met twice and exceeded 5 times, with 2004 being the record (57,934). Because of the projected larger runs, the department has also issued emergency orders, liberalizing sport fishing in recent years prior to the opening date of the season. The 2007 Deshka River king salmon escapement was approximately 18,000 fish.

The outlook for the 2008 Deshka River king salmon run is far below average, with a projected total run of 20,300 fish. This is below the 1979-2007 average run of 38,700 fish. Management actions may be necessary to reduce sport harvest in an effort to achieve the escapement goal.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

Northern District Salmon Management Plan

PROPOSAL 121: 5 AAC 21.358. Northern District Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Andy Couch

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would modify the Yentna River sockeye salmon sustainable escapement goal from 90,000 to 160,000 to 105,000 to 195,000.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The escapement goal for Yentna River is 90,000 to 160,000 sockeye salmon. Achievement of the lower end of the Yentna River optimal escapement goal shall take priority over not exceeding the upper end of the Kenai River escapement goal. When the sockeye salmon returns to the Kenai River are four million or greater, the optimal escapement goal is 75,000 to 180,000 sockeye salmon in the Yentna River.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would lead to further restrictions on the sport fishery, Northern District set gillnets, subsistence fishermen, and drift gillnets in order to meet the new higher OEG.

BACKGROUND: Prior to 1986, the run strength for this area was measured using sonar in the mainstem Susitna River. Because of flooding, this site became unusable. The sonar was then moved to the Yentna River in 1986. The goal range was established at 100,000-150,000 based on a relationship that was determined when the Susitna and

Yentna River projects were run concurrently. In 2002, the escapement goal in the Yentna River was changed to an SEG of 90,000-160,000. When the sockeye salmon returns to the Kenai River are four million or greater, the optimal escapement goal is 75,000 to 180,000 sockeye salmon in the Yentna River. Since 2002, the escapement goal has been exceeded once, met once, and below four times. The level of escapement in 2003 of approximately 181,000 was the highest observed since inception of this escapement program and the escapement in 2005 of just under 37,000 was the lowest ever observed.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department recommends **NO ACTION** on this proposal. The department, not the board, has the responsibility of establishing biological and sustainable escapement goals. The board, may establish an optimal escapement goal, if deemed appropriate, which considers biological and allocative factors and may differ from the BEG or SEG.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 122: 5 AAC 21.358(b). Northern District Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Matanuska Valley Advisory Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would modify the Yentna River sockeye salmon sustainable escapement goal from 90,000 to 160,000 to 105,000 to 195,000.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The escapement goal for Yentna River is 90,000 to 160,000 sockeye salmon. Achievement of the lower end of the Yentna River optimal escapement goal shall take priority over not exceeding the upper end of the Kenai River escapement goal. When the sockeye salmon returns to the Kenai River are four million or greater, the optimal escapement goal is 75,000 to 180,000 sockeye salmon in the Yentna River.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would lead to further restrictions on the sport fishery, Northern District set gillnets, subsistence fishermen, and drift gillnets in order to meet the new higher OEG.

BACKGROUND: The SEG for Yentna River sockeye salmon is 90,000-160,000 fish. Since 2002, the escapement goal has been exceeded once, met once, and below four times. The level of escapement in 2003 of approximately 181,000 was the highest observed since inception of this escapement program and the escapement in 2005 of just under 37,000 was the lowest ever observed.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department recommends **NO ACTION** on this proposal. The department, not the board, has the responsibility of establishing biological and sustainable escapement goals. The board, may establish an optimal escapement goal,

if deemed appropriate, which considers biological and allocative factors and may differ from the BEG or SEG.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 134: 5 AAC 21.358. Northern District Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: John Higgins

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would delete a large amount of language from the Northern District Salmon Management Plan. Deleted language would include language pertaining to escapement goal priorities, the Yentna River optimal escapement goal, prohibition on personal use gillnetting, and habitat issues.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The purposes of this management plan are to minimize the harvest of coho salmon bound for the Northern District of upper Cook Inlet and to provide the department direction for management of salmon stocks. The department shall manage the chum, pink, and sockeye salmon stocks primarily for commercial uses to provide commercial fisherman with an economic yield from the harvest of these salmon resources based on abundance. The department shall also manage the chum, pink, and sockeye salmon stocks to minimize the harvest of Northern District coho salmon, to provide sport and guided sport fisherman a reasonable opportunity to harvest these salmon resources over the entire run, as measured by the frequency of inriver restrictions, or as specified in this section and other regulations.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? The primary effect of this proposal would be to delete the Yentna River OEG when the Kenai River sockeye salmon runs are over 4 million fish. The department would then manage to meet the SEG of 90,000-160,000. Much of the remainder of the deleted text would have little impact on the overall management of the fisheries as this text is not needed for management purposes.

BACKGROUND: Prior to 1986, the run strength for this area was measured using sonar in the mainstem Susitna River. Beginning in 1978, the goal was 200,000 sockeye in the Susitna River at Sunshine Station. Because of flooding, this site became unusable. The sonar was then moved to the Yentna River in 1986. The goal range was established at 100,000-150,000 based on a relationship that was determined when the Susitna and Yentna River projects were run concurrently. In 2002, the escapement goal in the Yentna River was changed to an SEG of 90,000-160,000. When the sockeye salmon returns to the Kenai River are four million or greater, the optimal escapement goal is 75,000 to 180,000 sockeye salmon in the Yentna River.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 135: 5 AAC 21.358. Northern District Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: United Cook Inlet Drift Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would delete language in the Northern District Salmon Management Plan that directs the department to minimize the harvest of coho salmon while managing for sockeye, pink and chum salmon.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The purposes of this management plan are to minimize the harvest of coho salmon bound for the Northern District of upper Cook Inlet and to provide the department direction for management of salmon stocks. The department shall manage the chum, pink, and sockeye salmon stocks primarily for commercial uses to provide commercial fisherman with an economic yield from the harvest of these salmon resources based on abundance. The department shall also manage the chum, pink, and sockeye salmon stocks to minimize the harvest of Northern District coho salmon, to provide sport and guided sport fisherman a reasonable opportunity to harvest these salmon resources over the entire run, as measured by the frequency of inriver restrictions, or as specified in this section and other regulations.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? It is likely that there would be no significant change as written.

BACKGROUND: Prior to 1978, all salmon stocks in UCI were managed primarily for commercial uses as the recreational use of these stocks was small. In 1978, the BOF passed the first rendition of the Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plan as an uncodified policy. That policy was challenged in court and overturned. In 1981 however, it was passed into regulation. From 1981 to 1996 it remained relatively unchanged and directed the department to manage most stocks returning to UCI prior to July 1st "primarily" for recreational uses. From July 1 to August 15 most stocks were managed "primarily" for commercial uses with certain exceptions. After August 15, salmon stocks moving to the Kenai Peninsula drainages were managed for recreational purposes while all other stocks were managed for commercial purposes. In addition, in managing the commercial fishery, the department was instructed to "minimize" the harvest of certain recreationally important stocks such as Kenai River king and coho stocks. In 1996, the plan was changed to management priority by stocks; sockeye, pink and chum stocks were to be managed for commercial purposes with the caveat that a reasonable opportunity be provided to other users and coho and King salmon stocks were managed for recreational purposes.

Poor returns of coho salmon to Upper Cook Inlet in 1997 and 1999, coupled with not meeting escapement goals prompted the Board to reduce the coho salmon sport fisheries

on select Northern Cook Inlet streams. Coho salmon runs to Northern Cook Inlet increased beginning in 2000. The Board took action in 2005 to return the daily bag and possession limit to the original 3 per day/6 in possession along westside Susitna River tributaries, excluding Alexander Creek. Westside Susitna River tributaries are typically associated with relatively low harvest and use. However eastside Susitna and Talkeetna River tributaries, which are road accessible and receive high angler use, may not be able to sustain an increase in harvest during years with low or average returns. Overall exploitation rates for Kenai River coho salmon were high (84%) under the previous Kenai River Coho salmon management plan that allowed a 3 fish bag limit. Under the 2000 management plan, which included a 2 fish bag limit, exploitation ranged from 35% to 47% from 2000 to 2004. The liberalizations in 2005 are thought to have likely increased exploitation into the high 40% to low 50% range from 2005-2007.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 136: 5 AAC 21.358. Northern District Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Central Peninsula Advisory Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would delete language in the Northern District Salmon Management Plan that directs the department to minimize the harvest of coho salmon while managing for sockeye, pink and chum salmon. In addition it would delete section (b) and the OEG as well as section (d) dealing with the direction to minimize coho harvests in the Northern District set gillnet fishery.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The purposes of this management plan are to minimize the harvest of coho salmon bound for the Northern District of upper Cook Inlet and to provide the department direction for management of salmon stocks. The department shall manage the chum, pink, and sockeye salmon stocks primarily for commercial uses to provide commercial fisherman with an economic yield from the harvest of these salmon resources based on abundance. The department shall also manage the chum, pink, and sockeye salmon stocks to minimize the harvest of Northern District coho salmon, to provide sport and guided sport fisherman a reasonable opportunity to harvest these salmon resources over the entire run, as measured by the frequency of inriver restrictions, or as specified in this section and other regulations.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? It is likely that there would be no significant change as written.

BACKGROUND: Prior to 1978, all salmon stocks in UCI were basically managed primarily for commercial uses as the recreational use of these stocks was small. In 1978,

the BOF passed the first rendition of the Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plan as an uncodified policy. That policy was challenged in court and overturned. In 1981 however, it was passed into regulation. From 1981 to 1996 it remained relatively unchanged and directed the department to manage most stocks returning to UCI prior to July 1st "primarily" for recreational uses. From July 1 to August 15 most stocks were managed "primarily" for commercial uses with certain exceptions After August 15, salmon stocks moving to the Kenai Peninsula drainages were managed for recreational purposes while all other stocks were managed for commercial purposes. In addition, in managing the commercial fishery, the department was instructed to "minimize" the harvest of certain recreationally important stocks such as Kenai River king and coho stocks. In 1996, the plan was changed to management priority by stocks; sockeye, pink and chum stocks were to be managed for commercial purposes with the caveat that a reasonable opportunity be provided to other users and coho and king salmon stocks were managed for recreational purposes.

Poor returns of coho salmon to Upper Cook Inlet in 1997 and 1999, coupled with not meeting escapement goals prompted the Board to reduce the coho salmon sport fisheries on select Northern Cook Inlet streams. Coho salmon runs to Northern Cook Inlet increased beginning in 2000. The Board took action in 2005 to return the daily bag and possession limit to the original 3 per day/6 in possession along westside Susitna River tributaries, excluding Alexander Creek. Westside Susitna River tributaries are typically associated with relatively low harvest and use. However eastside Susitna and Talkeetna River tributaries, which are road accessible and receive high angler use, may not be able to sustain an increase in harvest during years with low or average returns. Overall exploitation rates for Kenai River coho salmon were high (84%) under the previous Kenai River Coho salmon management plan that allowed a 3 fish bag limit. Under the 2000 management plan, which included a 2 fish bag limit, exploitation ranged from 35% to 47% from 2000 to 2004. The liberalizations in 2005 are thought to have likely increased exploitation into the high 40% to low 50% range from 2005-2007.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on the allocative aspects of this proposal but **SUPPORTS** a simplified management plan.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 137: 5 AAC 21.358. Northern District Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Central Peninsula Advisory Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would delete language in the Northern District Salmon Management Plan that directs the department to minimize the harvest of coho salmon while managing for sockeye, pink and chum salmon.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The purposes of this management plan are to minimize the harvest of coho salmon bound for the Northern District of upper Cook Inlet and to provide the department direction for management of salmon stocks. The department shall manage the chum, pink, and sockeye salmon stocks primarily for commercial uses to provide commercial fisherman with an economic yield from the harvest of these salmon resources based on abundance. The department shall also manage the chum, pink, and sockeye salmon stocks to minimize the harvest of Northern District coho salmon, to provide sport and guided sport fisherman a reasonable opportunity to harvest these salmon resources over the entire run, as measured by the frequency of inriver restrictions, or as specified in this section and other regulations.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? It is likely that there would be no significant change as written.

BACKGROUND: Prior to 1978, all salmon stocks in UCI were managed primarily for commercial uses as the recreational use of these stocks was small. In 1978, the BOF passed the first rendition of the Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plan as an uncodified policy. That policy was challenged in court and overturned. In 1981 however, it was passed into regulation. From 1981 to 1996 it remained relatively unchanged and directed the department to manage most stocks returning to UCI prior to July 1st "primarily" for recreational uses. From July 1 to August 15 most stocks were managed "primarily" for commercial uses with certain exceptions. After August 15, salmon stocks moving to the Kenai Peninsula drainages were managed for recreational purposes while all other stocks were managed for commercial purposes. In addition, in managing the commercial fishery, the department was instructed to "minimize" the harvest of certain recreationally important stocks such as Kenai River king and coho stocks. In 1996, the plan was changed to management priority by stocks; sockeye, pink and chum stocks were to be managed for commercial purposes with the caveat that a reasonable opportunity be provided to other users and coho and king salmon stocks were managed for recreational purposes.

Poor returns of coho salmon to Upper Cook Inlet in 1997 and 1999, coupled with not meeting escapement goals prompted the Board to reduce the coho salmon sport fisheries on select Northern Cook Inlet streams. Coho salmon runs to Northern Cook Inlet increased beginning in 2000. The Board took action in 2005 to return the daily bag and possession limit to the original 3 per day/6 in possession along westside Susitna River tributaries, excluding Alexander Creek. Westside Susitna River tributaries are typically associated with relatively low harvest and use. However eastside Susitna and Talkeetna River tributaries, which are road accessible and receive high angler use, may not be able to sustain an increase in harvest during years with low or average returns. Overall exploitation rates for Kenai River coho salmon were high (84%) under the previous Kenai River Coho salmon management plan that allowed a 3 fish bag limit. Under the 2000 management plan, which included a 2 fish bag limit, exploitation ranged from 35% to 47% from 2000 to 2004. The liberalizations in 2005 are thought to have likely increased exploitation into the high 40% to low 50% range from 2005-2007.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on the allocative aspects of this proposal but **SUPPORTS** a simplified management plan.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 138: 5 AAC 21.358. Northern District Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Matanuska Valley Advisory Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would rewrite the Northern District Salmon Management Plan as it was prior to the 2005 Board of Fisheries meeting.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The purposes of this management plan are to minimize the harvest of coho salmon bound for the Northern District of upper Cook Inlet and to provide the department direction for management of salmon stocks. The department shall manage the chum, pink, and sockeye salmon stocks primarily for commercial uses to provide commercial fisherman with an economic yield from the harvest of these salmon resources based on abundance. The department shall also manage the chum, pink, and sockeye salmon stocks to minimize the harvest of Northern District coho salmon, to provide sport and guided sport fisherman a reasonable opportunity to harvest these salmon resources over the entire run, as measured by the frequency of inriver restrictions, or as specified in this section and other regulations.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? The primary changes would be to have more restrictive fishing for the drift gillnet fleet and reinsert coho restrictions on drift and set gillnet fishers. In addition, the OEG of 75,000 to 180,000 sockeye salmon in Kenai returns of over four million would be deleted.

BACKGROUND: The Northern District Salmon Management Plan directs the department to manage Northern District salmon stocks based on the abundance of Yentna River sockeye salmon and the escapement goal for the Yentna River, or other salmon abundance indices as it deems appropriate. The current escapement goal in the Yentna River is 90,000 to 160,000 sockeye. In addition in large returns of over 4 million sockeye salmon to the Kenai River, there is an OEG in the Yentna River of 75,000 to 180,000 sockeye that was adopted in 2005. For the last 15 seasons, the Northern District set gillnet fishery has been closed for one or more periods except in 2000, and the drift gillnet fishery has been restricted each year for one or more periods to attempt to meet the Yentna River escapement goal. The number and severity of closures and restrictions in both fisheries is increasing each year. The department's inability to react quicker with additional restrictions in endeavoring to meet the Yentna River sockeye salmon goal is because of the time period lag from the fisheries to the sonar site. Actions taken in the drift fishery may not be observed or realized until 10 to 14 days later and actions taken in the Northern District may not be realized for 7 to 10 days. Once the effects of the first actions are observed it is generally too late to take further corrective actions.

Poor returns of coho salmon to Upper Cook Inlet in 1997 and 1999, coupled with not meeting escapement goals prompted the Board to reduce the coho salmon sport fisheries on select Northern Cook Inlet streams. Coho salmon runs to Northern Cook Inlet increased beginning in 2000. The Board took action in 2005 to return the daily bag and possession limit to the original 3 per day/6 in possession along westside Susitna River tributaries, excluding Alexander Creek. Westside Susitna River tributaries are typically associated with relatively low harvest and use. However eastside Susitna and Talkeetna River tributaries, which are road accessible and receive high angler use, may not be able to sustain an increase in harvest during years with low or average returns. Overall exploitation rates for Kenai River coho salmon were high (84%) under the previous Kenai River Coho salmon management plan that allowed a 3 fish bag limit. Under the 2000 management plan, which included a 2 fish bag limit, exploitation ranged from 35% to 47% from 2000 to 2004. The liberalizations in 2005 are thought to have likely increased exploitation into the high 40% to low 50% range from 2005-2007.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. However, the department is **OPPOSED** to regulatory actions that would hinder the ability to manage for sockeye salmon escapement goals.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 139: 5 AAC 21.358. Northern District Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Kris and Marie Draper

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal seeks to close commercial fishing in Alexander Creek, establish an annual sport bag limit of one fish per year, and set a sport fishing season from June – June 30 and open only 4 hours per day.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? There is no commercial fishing allowed in Alexander Creek.

King salmon in Alexander Creek from its mouth upstream to ADF&G regulatory markers located 400 feet upstream of its confluence with Trail Creek may be taken in the sport fishery from January 1-June 30; bag and possession limit is one king salmon 20 inches or greater in length; after taking and retaining a king salmon 20 inches or greater in length, a person may not sport fish for king salmon on that same day.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would reduce the sport harvest and effort for king salmon on Alexander Creek by an unknown amount.

BACKGROUND: The sport harvest of king salmon from Alexander Creek is no longer sustainable at current levels. It is likely that Alexander Creek lost much of its productive king salmon rearing areas as a result of northern pike infestation and predation on juvenile king salmon. Alexander Creek is a slow meandering weedy stream with many back water sloughs, oxbows channels and shallow interconnecting lakes and ponds providing ideal spawning and rearing habit for northern pike.

The escapement goal range established by the department for king salmon escapements into Alexander Creek is between 2,100 and 6,000 fish. In the four of the past six years (2002-2007), Alexander Creek has failed to achieve the escapement goal, and for two of those years escapements were only slightly above the lower end of the goal. During 2006 and 2007, the escapement of king salmon into Alexander Creek were the lowest on record with only 885 and 460 spawning fish respectively.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. Since there is no commercial fishing in Alexander Creek, action to the sport fishery would be better served under Proposals 330-334 which also seek to reduce the sport harvest of king salmon in Alexander Creek.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 140: 5 AAC 21.358. Northern District Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai River Sportfishing Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal seeks to clarify that achieving the lower end of the sockeye salmon escapement goal in the Yentna River shall take priority over any of the Kenai River sockeye salmon escapement goals.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Achievement of the lower end of the Yentna River optimal escapement goal shall take priority over not exceeding the upper end of the Kenai River escapement goal. When the sockeye salmon returns to the Kenai River are four million or greater, the optimal escapement goal is 75,000 to 180,000 sockeye salmon in the Yentna River.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal seeks to eliminate confusion between which goals the board had intended to use as a priority. As written, this proposal does not clarify the regulation.

BACKGROUND: Prior to 1986, the escapement goal for this area was measured in the mainstem Susitna River. Beginning in 1978, the goal was 100,000 sockeye in the Susitna River at Sunshine Station. Because of flooding, this site became unusable. The sonar was moved to the Yentna River in 1986. The goal range was established at 100,000-150,000 based on a relationship that was determined when the two projects were run

concurrently. In 2002, the escapement goal in the Yentna River was changed to an SEG of 90,000-160,000. When the sockeye salmon returns to the Kenai River are four million or greater, the optimal escapement goal is 75,000 to 180,000 sockeye salmon in the Yentna River. The Board also adopted a priority by stating achievement of the lower end of the Yentna River optimal escapement goal shall take priority over not exceeding the upper end of the Kenai River escapement goal.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. However, as written, this proposal does not provide the clarity necessary for inseason implementation.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 141: 5 AAC 21.358(c). Northern District Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Northern District Set Netters Association of Cook Inlet

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would extend the time by an additional 6 days in which the department could reduce the gear of Northern District set gillnet fishermen instead of closing the fishery when restrictions are necessary but complete closures are not.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? From July 20 through July 31, if the department's assessment of abundance indicates that restrictions are necessary to achieve the escapement goal, the commissioner may, by emergency order, close the commercial set gillnet fishery in the Northern District and immediately reopen the season during which the number of set gillnets that may be used is limited to the following options selected at the discretion of the commissioner of three set gillnets that are not more than 105 fathoms in aggregate length, two set gillnets that are not more than 70 fathoms in aggregate length, or one set gillnet that is not more than 35 fathoms in length.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would allow the department to restrict gear in the Northern District for an additional 6 days instead of closing the fishery if the Yentna River escapement is lagging but expected to meet the escapement goal. Effects of this proposal would be dependent on management actions taken during the season.

BACKGROUND: Sockeye salmon bound for the Yentna River move through Upper Cook Inlet during July. They are mixed with salmon of all species bound for Northern District as well as Central District streams. The department has used a number of management measures to reduce the harvest rate on fish bound for the Northern District, such as closures in the Central District drift gillnet fishery and the Northern District set gillnet fishery. The sockeye salmon escapement in the Yentna River has exceeded the

current range of 90,000 to 160,000 sockeye one year, been within the range one year, and been under three of the last five years.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. However, the department does support the development of flexible management plans.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 142: 5 AAC 21.358(d). Northern District Salmon Management Plan. (This proposal should also address 5 AAC 21.320, Weekly Fishing Periods)

PROPOSED BY: Northern District Set Netters Association of Cook Inlet

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would increase the amount of fishing time with an additional fishing period each week on Saturdays after August 10.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? In the set gillnet fishery, salmon may be taken in the Northern District from 7:00 a.m. Monday until 7:00 p.m. Monday and from 7:00 a.m. Thursday until 7:00 p.m. Thursday. From July 20 through July 31, the department may limit the number of set gillnets that may be used. Additional fishing periods, other than the weekly fishing periods described in 5 AAC 21.320(a) (1), may not be provided when coho salmon are expected to be the most abundant species harvested during that period and after August 15, fishing periods are limited to those described in 5 AAC 21.320(a) (1).

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would increase the harvest of sockeye and coho salmon in the Northern District by an unknown amount.

BACKGROUND: Sockeye salmon bound for the Yentna River move through Upper Cook Inlet during July. They are mixed with salmon of all species bound for Northern District as well as Central District streams. The department has used a number of management measures to reduce the harvest rate on fish bound for the Northern District, such as closures in the Central District drift gillnet fishery and the Northern District set gillnet fishery. The sockeye salmon escapement in the Yentna River has exceeded the current goal of 90,000 to 160,000 sockeye one year, within the goal one year, and below the goal three of the last five years.

Poor returns of coho salmon to Upper Cook Inlet in 1997 and 1999, coupled with not meeting escapement goals prompted the Board to reduce the coho salmon sport fisheries on select Northern Cook Inlet streams. Coho salmon runs to Northern Cook Inlet increased beginning in 2000. The Board took action in 2005 to return the daily bag and possession limit to the original 3 per day/6 in possession along westside Susitna River

tributaries, excluding Alexander Creek. Westside Susitna River tributaries are typically associated with relatively low harvest and use. However eastside Susitna and Talkeetna River tributaries, which are road accessible and receive high angler use, may not be able to sustain an increase in harvest during years with low or average returns. Overall exploitation rates for Kenai River coho salmon were high (84%) under the previous Kenai River Coho salmon management plan that allowed a 3 fish bag limit. Under the 2000 management plan, which included a 2 fish bag limit, exploitation ranged from 35% to 47% from 2000 to 2004. The liberalizations in 2005 are thought to have likely increased exploitation into the high 40% to low 50% range from 2005-2007.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 143: 5 AAC 21.358. Northern District Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Tom M. Rollman

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would separate management of the east side statistical areas from the west side statistical areas in the Northern District of Upper Cook Inlet.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The department shall manage the Northern District commercial salmon fisheries based on the abundance of Yentna River sockeye salmon, the Yentna River escapement goal, or other salmon abundance indices as it deems appropriate. Achievement of the lower end of the Yentna River optimal escapement goal shall take priority over not exceeding the upper end of the Kenai River escapement goal. When the sockeye salmon returns to the Kenai River are four million or greater, the optimal escapement goal is 75,000 to 180,000 sockeye salmon in the Yentna River.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? If passed as written, the department would fish the Eastern Subdistrict of the Northern District during regular periods only and passively manage this area similarly to the way we manage the Western Subdistrict of the Central District. Effects on harvests would be dependent on management actions taken based on run strengths.

BACKGROUND: The Northern District is 50 miles long, averages 20 miles in width, and is divided into two Subdistricts, the General (west side) and the Eastern Subdistrict. Set gillnets are the only gear permitted in the Northern District. The largest stock component of fish moving through the Northern District is the Susitna River sockeye salmon stock. The escapement goal for the Susitna River measured at the Yentna River is the primary management objective for the entire Northern District. The Yentna River

count is multiplied by 1.95 to estimate the Susitna River escapement, and the Susitna River escapement is doubled to estimate the return of sockeye to the Northern District. The harvest of sockeye on the east side of the Northern district is small, generally under 15,000 fish. The stock composition of this harvest is likely dominated by Turnagain Arm, Swanson River and other non Susitna stocks.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. However, the department urges caution to this approach in fishing the Northern District.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 144: 5 AAC 21.358(c). Northern District Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Northern District Set Netters Association of Cook Inlet

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would separate management of the east side statistical areas from the west side statistical areas in the Northern District of Upper Cook Inlet.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The department shall manage the Northern District commercial salmon fisheries based on the abundance of Yentna River sockeye salmon, the Yentna River escapement goal, or other salmon abundance indices as it deems appropriate. Achievement of the lower end of the Yentna River optimal escapement goal shall take priority over not exceeding the upper end of the Kenai River escapement goal. When the sockeye salmon returns to the Kenai River are four million or greater, the optimal escapement goal is 75,000 to 180,000 sockeye salmon in the Yentna River.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? If passed as written, the department would fish the Eastern Subdistrict of the Northern District during regular periods only, and passively manage this area similar to the way we manage the Western Subdistrict of the Central District. For the General Subdistrict we would manage for Susitna River escapements but if closures were implemented, it might be possible to fish north of the Little Susitna and Fire Island differently. Given that we have never managed this area in this way it may take some trial and error to develop a successful strategy.

BACKGROUND: The Northern District is 50 miles long, averages 20 miles in width, and is divided into two Subdistricts, the General (west side) and the Eastern Subdistrict. Set gillnets are the only gear permitted in the Northern District. The largest stock component of fish moving through the Northern District is the Susitna River sockeye salmon stock. The escapement goal for the Susitna River measured at the Yentna River is the primary management objective for the entire Northern District. The Yentna River

count is multiplied by 1.95 to estimate the Susitna River escapement, and the Susitna River escapement is doubled to estimate the return of sockeye to the Northern District. The harvest of sockeye on the east side of the Northern district is small, generally under 15,000 fish. The stock composition of this harvest is likely dominated by Turnagain Arm, Swanson River and other non Susitna stocks.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. However, the department urges caution to this approach in fishing the Northern District.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 145: 5 AAC 21.358(b). Northern District Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Betty Gilcrist

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would separate management of the east side statistical areas from the west side statistical areas in the Northern District of Upper Cook Inlet.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The department shall manage the Northern District commercial salmon fisheries based on the abundance of Yentna River sockeye salmon, the Yentna River escapement goal, or other salmon abundance indices as it deems appropriate. Achievement of the lower end of the Yentna River optimal escapement goal shall take priority over not exceeding the upper end of the Kenai River escapement goal. When the sockeye salmon returns to the Kenai River are four million or greater, the optimal escapement goal is 75,000 to 180,000 sockeye salmon in the Yentna River.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? If passed as written, the department would fish the Eastern Subdistrict of the Northern District during regular periods only and passively manage this area similar to the way we manage the Western Subdistrict of the Central District. If catches were extremely poor or some other escapement objective was developed on the east side we would shift to active management based on that objective.

BACKGROUND: The Northern District is 50 miles long, averages 20 miles in width, and is divided into two Subdistricts, the General (west side) and the Eastern Subdistrict. Set gillnets are the only gear permitted in the Northern District. The largest stock component of fish moving through the Northern District is the Susitna River sockeye salmon stock. The escapement goal for the Susitna River measured at the Yentna River is the primary management objective for the entire Northern District. The Yentna River count is multiplied by 1.95 to estimate the Susitna River escapement, and the Susitna River escapement is doubled to estimate the return of sockeye to the Northern District.

The harvest of sockeye on the east side of the Northern district is small, generally under 15,000 fish. The stock composition of this harvest is likely dominated by Turnagain Arm, Swanson River and other non Susitna stocks.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. However, the department urges caution to this approach in fishing the Northern District.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 123: 5 AAC 21.xxx. New section.

PROPOSED BY: Matanuska Valley Advisory Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would eliminate the stocking program in Fish Creek until the escapement goal has been met consistently over two life cycles.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? No specific regulations are applicable.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Available sockeye salmon may be reduced for all user groups using this resource.

BACKGROUND: Since 2002, the Fish Creek sustainable escapement goal has been based on the percentile approach (Bue and Hasbrouck *Unpublished*; Hasbrouck and Edmundson 2007) applied to observed escapements from a time period prior to hatchery supplementation (1938-1978) so that the effects of supplementation on yields and subsequent escapement of this stock could be ignored. It was thought that a range of escapements from 20,000 to 70,000 fish would utilize available spawning areas, produce adequate numbers of juvenile salmon that would not tax the productive capacity of the lake, and sustain yields into the future.

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game initiated the Big Lake Salmon Hatchery in 1976. In 1993, this project was transferred to the Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association. At that time, the brood stock being reared at the Big Lake Hatchery was moved to the Euklutna Salmon Hatchery, and in 1998 the program was transferred to the Trail Lakes Hatchery. The purpose of this project is the enhancement of sockeye salmon returning to Big Lake for common property fisheries.

Harvesting of salmon for brood stock and seeding in Cook Inlet is done by the Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association. These actions are reviewed and approved by the Cook Inlet Regional Planning Team. A multitude of factors are taken in consideration prior to approval. Some of these factors are pathology reviews, genetic reviews, and stock availability. Below is a table of released sockeye salmon into Meadow Creek.

Meadow Creek Releases		
Year	Stage	No. Released
1998	fry	3,000,000
1999	fry	197,000
2000	fry	846,000
2001	IHNV Detected	No Releases
2002	fry	4,316,000
2003	fry	3,589,000
2004	fry	5,000,000
2005	fry	1,742,300
2006	fry	444,200
2006	pre-smolt	426,000
2007	fry	3,812,400
2007	pre-smolt	702,500
2007	smolt	315,700

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department recommends **NO ACTION** on this proposal. The board does not have regulatory authority to direct stocking programs for non-profit organizations.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery

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Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plan

PROPOSAL 114: 5 AAC 21.363. Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: United Cook Inlet Drift Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would renumber 5 AAC 21.363 to 5 AAC 21.351 or 5 AAC 352.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Below is the list of plans under Chapter 21, Cook Inlet Area.

5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan
5 AAC 21.356. Cook Inlet Pink Salmon Management Plan (Even Years)
5 AAC 21.358. Northern District Salmon Management Plan.
5 AAC 21.359. Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan.
5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan.
5 AAC 21.363. Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plan.
5 AAC 21.365. Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan.

5 AAC 21.366. Northern District King Salmon Management Plan
5 AAC 21.368. Big River Sockeye Salmon Management Plan.
5 AAC 21.370. Packers Creek Sockeye Salmon Management Plan

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal may lessen the confusion of these plans by placing 5 AAC 21.363 in a more chronological order.

BACKGROUND: The number and complexity of Upper Cook Inlet management plans has evolved over the years. Available regulatory numbers have been chosen on an adhoc basis and admittedly the chronological order is somewhat confusing.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 124: 5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan; 5 AAC 21.358. Northern District Salmon Management Plan; 5 AAC 21.359. Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan; 5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan; 5 AAC 21.363. Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plan; 5 AAC 21.365. Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan; 5 AAC 56.070. Kenai River and Kasilof River Early-run King Salmon Conservation Management Plan; 5 AAC 56.080. Kenai River Coho Salmon Management Plan; and 5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai Area Fishermen's Coalition

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal may lessen the confusion of management plans in Upper Cook Inlet by reorganizing the Administrative Code sections into a format of an overall plan that provides information and regulation common to all fisheries.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Below is the list of plans under Chapter 21, Cook Inlet Area.

5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan
5 AAC 21.356. Cook Inlet Pink Salmon Management Plan (Even Years)
5 AAC 21.358. Northern District Salmon Management Plan.
5 AAC 21.359. Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan.
5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan.
5 AAC 21.363. Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plan.
5 AAC 21.365. Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan.
5 AAC 21.366. Northern District King Salmon Management Plan

5 AAC 21.368. Big River Sockeye Salmon Management Plan.
5 AAC 21.370. Packers Creek Sockeye Salmon Management Plan

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal may lessen the confusion of these plans by placing 5 AAC 21.363 in a more chronological order.

BACKGROUND: The number and complexity of Upper Cook Inlet management plans has evolved over the years. Available regulatory numbers have been chosen on an adhoc basis and admittedly the chronological order is somewhat confusing.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 126: 5 AAC 21.363. Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Central Peninsula Advisory Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal may reduce the criteria level necessary for the commissioner to take action outside the current management plans.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? It is the intent of the board that, while in most circumstances the department will adhere to the management plans in this chapter, nothing in the management plans is intended to override the commissioner's emergency order authority under AS 16.05.060 should significant new information arise that, in the commissioner's judgment, warrants departure from the provisions in the management plans.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Effects of this proposal would depend on the commissioner’s actions.

BACKGROUND: Since 1999, the Kenai River in-river run goal has been exceeded 5 of 9 years and within the goal four times. During that same time period, the Kenai River optimum escapement goal has been below twice, within four times, and exceeded three times. The Kasilof River biological escapement goal has been exceeded 8 of 9 years. The current OEG of 150,000 to 300,000 sockeye salmon was established in 2001 and has been exceeded 6 of 7 years. The sustainable escapement goal for Yentna River sockeye salmon is 90,000-160,000 fish. Since 2002, the goal has been exceeded once, met once, and below four times. The Fish Creek sockeye salmon sustainable escapement goal has been exceeded twice, within three times, and below once in the last 6 years.

The suite of plans that govern the management of Upper Cook Inlet salmon stocks have a number of complex and competing objectives. Limitations under these management

plans, such as closed windows and defined fishing time, have conflicted with the department's ability to manage for established escapement goals. It is unclear at times how to balance these restrictions and the established escapement goals which are often in conflict.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal but **SUPPORTS** clarifying the BOF intent. The Department of Law may also wish to comment on this proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 127: 5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan.; and 5 AAC 21.363. Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Wesley J. Humbyrd

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would direct the commissioner to manage for escapement goals using emergency order authority.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? 5 AAC 21.363 (a) states that the department should receive long-term direction in management of upper Cook Inlet salmon stocks and salmon species. Divisions within the department must receive long-term direction in order to accomplish their missions and plan management, research, administrative, and other programs. Upper Cook Inlet stakeholders should be informed of the long-term management objectives of the Board of Fisheries. Under this, the Board of Fisheries established provisions for the management and conservation of upper Cook Inlet salmon stocks.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Effects of this proposal would depend on the commissioner's actions.

BACKGROUND: Since 1999, the Kenai River in-river run goal has been exceeded 5 of 9 years and within the goal four times. During that same time period, the Kenai River optimum escapement goal has been below twice, within four times, and exceeded three times. The Kasilof River biological escapement goal has been exceeded 8 of 9 years. The current OEG of 150,000 to 300,000 sockeye salmon was established in 2001 and has been exceeded 6 of 7 years. The sustainable escapement goal for Yentna River sockeye salmon is 90,000-160,000 fish. Since 2002, the goal has been exceeded once, met once, and below four times. The Fish Creek sockeye salmon sustainable escapement goal has been exceeded twice, within three times, and below once in the last 6 years.

The suite of plans that govern the management of Upper Cook Inlet salmon stocks have a number of complex and competing objectives. Limitations under these management

plans, such as closed windows and defined fishing time, have conflicted with the department's ability to manage for established escapement goals. It is unclear at times how to balance these restrictions and the established escapement goals which are often in conflict.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal but **SUPPORTS** clarifying the BOF intent. The Department of Law may also wish to comment on this proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 128: 5 AAC 21.363. Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: United Cook Inlet Drift Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would clarify that escapement goals are a priority over current regulations which limit allowable fishing time, closed windows, and fishing areas. It would also direct the commissioner to use emergency order authority to manage for escapement goals.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? 5 AAC 21.363 (a) states that the department should receive long-term direction in management of upper Cook Inlet salmon stocks and salmon species. Divisions within the department must receive long-term direction in order to accomplish their missions and plan management, research, administrative, and other programs. Upper Cook Inlet stakeholders should be informed of the long-term management objectives of the Board of Fisheries. Under this, the Board of Fisheries established provisions for the management and conservation of upper Cook Inlet salmon stocks.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would direct that achieving the escapement goal is the primary objective of fisheries management.

BACKGROUND: Since 1999, the Kenai River in-river run goal has been exceeded 5 of 9 years and within the goal four times. During that same time period, the Kenai River optimum escapement goal has been below twice, within four times, and exceeded three times. The Kasilof River biological escapement goal has been exceeded 8 of 9 years. The current OEG of 150,000 to 300,000 sockeye salmon was established in 2001 and has been exceeded 6 of 7 years. The sustainable escapement goal for Yentna River sockeye salmon is 90,000-160,000 fish. Since 2002, the goal has been exceeded once, met once, and below four times. The Fish Creek sockeye salmon sustainable escapement goal has been exceeded twice, within three times, and below once in the last 6 years.

The suite of plans that govern the management of Upper Cook Inlet salmon stocks have a number of complex and competing objectives. Limitations under these management plans, such as closed windows and defined fishing time, have conflicted with the department's ability to manage for established escapement goals. It is unclear at times how to balance these restrictions and the established escapement goals which are often in conflict.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal but **SUPPORTS** clarifying the BOF intent.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 129: 5 AAC 21.363. Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: United Cook Inlet Drift Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would clarify that escapement goals are a priority over current regulations which describe allowable fishing time, closed windows, and fishing areas.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? 5 AAC 21.363 (a) states that the department should receive long-term direction in management of upper Cook Inlet salmon stocks and salmon species. Divisions within the department must receive long-term direction in order to accomplish their missions and plan management, research, administrative, and other programs. Upper Cook Inlet stakeholders should be informed of the long-term management objectives of the Board of Fisheries. Under this, the Board of Fisheries established provisions for the management and conservation of upper Cook Inlet salmon stocks.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? If adopted this proposal would direct and clarify that achieving the escapement goal is the primary objective of fisheries management.

BACKGROUND: Since 1999, the Kenai River in-river run goal has been exceeded 5 of 9 years and within the goal four times. During that same time period, the Kenai River optimum escapement goal has been below twice, within four times, and exceeded three times. The Kasilof River biological escapement goal has been exceeded 8 of 9 years. The current OEG of 150,000 to 300,000 sockeye salmon was established in 2001 and has been exceeded 6 of 7 years. The sustainable escapement goal for Yentna River sockeye salmon is 90,000-160,000 fish. Since 2002, the goal has been exceeded once, met once, and below four times. The Fish Creek sockeye salmon sustainable escapement goal has been exceeded twice, within three times, and below once in the last 6 years.

The suite of plans that govern the management of Upper Cook Inlet salmon stocks have a number of complex and competing objectives. Limitations under these management plans, such as closed windows and defined fishing time, have conflicted with the department's ability to manage for established escapement goals. It is unclear at times how to balance these restrictions and the established escapement goals which are often in conflict.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal but **SUPPORTS** clarifying the BOF intent.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 130: 5 AAC 21.363. Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai Peninsula Fishermen's Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would clarify that escapement goals are a priority over current regulations which describe allowable fishing time, closed windows, and fishing areas.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? 5 AAC 21.363 (a) states that the department should receive long-term direction in management of upper Cook Inlet salmon stocks and salmon species. Divisions within the department must receive long-term direction in order to accomplish their missions and plan management, research, administrative, and other programs. Upper Cook Inlet stakeholders should be informed of the long-term management objectives of the Board of Fisheries. Under this, the Board of Fisheries established provisions for the management and conservation of upper Cook Inlet salmon stocks.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? If adopted this proposal would direct and clarify that achieving the escapement goal is the primary objective of fisheries management.

BACKGROUND: Since 1999, the Kenai River in-river run goal has been exceeded 5 of 9 years and within the goal four times. During that same time period, the Kenai River optimum escapement goal has been below twice, within four times, and exceeded three times. The Kasilof River biological escapement goal has been exceeded 8 of 9 years. The current OEG of 150,000 to 300,000 sockeye salmon was established in 2001 and has been exceeded 6 of 7 years. The sustainable escapement goal for Yentna River sockeye salmon is 90,000-160,000 fish. Since 2002, the goal has been exceeded once, met once, and below four times. The Fish Creek sockeye salmon sustainable escapement goal has been exceeded twice, within three times, and below once in the last 6 years.

The suite of plans that govern the management of Upper Cook Inlet salmon stocks have a number of complex and competing objectives. Limitations under these management plans, such as closed windows and defined fishing time, have conflicted with the department's ability to manage for established escapement goals. It is unclear at times how to balance these restrictions and the established escapement goals which are often in conflict.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal but **SUPPORTS** clarifying the BOF intent.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 131: 5 AAC 21.363. Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Gary L. Hollier

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would clarify that escapement goals are a priority over current regulations which describe allowable fishing time, closed windows, and fishing areas.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? 5 AAC 21.363 (a) states that the department should receive long-term direction in management of upper Cook Inlet salmon stocks and salmon species. Divisions within the department must receive long-term direction in order to accomplish their missions and plan management, research, administrative, and other programs. Upper Cook Inlet stakeholders should be informed of the long-term management objectives of the Board of Fisheries. Under this, the Board of Fisheries established provisions for the management and conservation of upper Cook Inlet salmon stocks.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? If adopted this proposal would direct and clarify that achieving the escapement goal is the primary objective of fisheries management

BACKGROUND: Since 1999, the Kenai River in-river run goal has been exceeded 5 of 9 years and within the goal four times. During that same time period, the Kenai River optimum escapement goal has been below twice, within four times, and exceeded three times. The Kasilof River biological escapement goal has been exceeded 8 of 9 years. The current OEG of 150,000 to 300,000 sockeye salmon was established in 2001 and has been exceeded 6 of 7 years. The sustainable escapement goal for Yentna River sockeye salmon is 90,000-160,000 fish. Since 2002, the goal has been exceeded once, met once, and below four times. The Fish Creek sockeye salmon sustainable escapement goal has been exceeded twice, within three times, and below once in the last 6 years.

The suite of plans that govern the management of Upper Cook Inlet salmon stocks have a number of complex and competing objectives. Limitations under these management plans, such as closed windows and defined fishing time, have conflicted with the department's ability to manage for established escapement goals. It is unclear at times how to balance these restrictions and the established escapement goals which are often in conflict.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal but **SUPPORTS** clarifying the BOF intent.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 132: 5 AAC 21.363. Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai River Sportfishing Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would prioritize management objectives within the management plan. The proposal places the achieving the lower end of escapement goals and closed fishing periods as a higher priority than exceeding the upper end of the goal. It also creates an intent statement that fisheries shall be provided no less than 51% harvest share of species and stocks designated for management priority of that fishery.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? 5 AAC 21.363 (a) states that the department should receive long-term direction in management of upper Cook Inlet salmon stocks and salmon species. Divisions within the department must receive long-term direction in order to accomplish their missions and plan management, research, administrative, and other programs. Upper Cook Inlet stakeholders should be informed of the long-term management objectives of the Board of Fisheries. Under this, the Board of Fisheries established provisions for the management and conservation of upper Cook Inlet salmon stocks.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal may cause escapement goals to be exceeded. Harvestable surpluses of some stocks would likely be forgone. By redefining priorities and harvest shares, there would likely be a shift in allocation and at times complete failures trying to achieve competing allocative objectives.

BACKGROUND: Since 1999, the Kenai River in-river run goal has been exceeded 5 of 9 years and within the goal four times. During that same time period, the Kenai River optimum escapement goal has been below twice, within four times, and exceeded three times. The Kasilof River biological escapement goal has been exceeded 8 of 9 years. The current OEG of 150,000 to 300,000 sockeye salmon was established in 2001 and has been exceeded 6 of 7 years. The sustainable escapement goal for Yentna River sockeye

salmon is 90,000-160,000 fish. Since 2002, the goal has been exceeded once, met once, and below four times. The Fish Creek sockeye salmon sustainable escapement goal has been exceeded twice, within three times, and below once in the last 6 years.

The suite of plans that govern the management of Upper Cook Inlet salmon stocks have a number of complex and competing objectives. Limitations under these management plans, such as closed windows and defined fishing time, have conflicted with the department's ability to manage for established escapement goals. It is unclear at times how to balance these restrictions and the established escapement goals which are often in conflict.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. However, the department is **OPPOSED** to managing based upon harvest shares. The department is unable to manage for a harvest share inseason between the different user groups.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 115: 5 AAC 21.363. Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: John Higgins

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Return Cook Inlet commercial regulations to what they were in 1993-1995.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The preamble to 5 AAC 21.363 has not changed much since 1978. It states that the department should receive long-term direction in management of upper Cook Inlet salmon stocks and salmon species. Divisions within the department must receive long-term direction in order to accomplish their missions and plan management, research, administrative, and other programs. Upper Cook Inlet stakeholders should be informed of the long-term management objectives of the Board of Fisheries. Under this, the Board of Fisheries established provisions for the management and conservation of upper Cook Inlet salmon stocks.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would revert back to a plan which had more flexibility that the current management plan. Substantial changes would be no closed windows, no hour limitations, and a season which was longer. Harvests would be dependent upon management actions taken inseason.

BACKGROUND: The Upper Cook Inlet Plan first was passed as a policy by the BOF in 1978. After being thrown out by court action it was readopted in 1981. The plan changed little between 1981 and 1995. That plan set priorities for management by time period. Prior to July 1 the inlet was managed primarily for recreational purposes with

certain exceptions, from July 1 to August 15 primarily for commercial purposes with certain exceptions and after August 15 for a mixture of purposes depending on area. The plan from 1995 is printed below:

5 AAC 21.363. UPPER COOK INLET SALMON MANAGEMENT PLAN. *(a) The Department of Fish and Game should receive long-term direction in management of upper Cook Inlet salmon stocks rather than being called upon to respond annually to changing management policies. Divisions within the department must receive long-term direction in order to accomplish their missions and plan management, research, administrative, and other programs. Therefore, the board establishes the following priorities for the use of upper Cook Inlet salmon stocks:*

(1) consistent with the statutory priority for subsistence, the harvest of upper Cook Inlet salmon for customary and traditional subsistence uses will be allowed for specific species in appropriate areas, seasons, and periods to satisfy subsistence needs; other beneficial uses, to the extent they are consistent with the public interest and overall benefit of the people of Alaska, will be allowed in order to maximize the benefits of these resources;

(2) Northern District king, early Kenai king, and early Russian River sockeye salmon stocks, which normally move into upper Cook Inlet to spawning areas before July 1, will be managed primarily for recreational uses in order to promote the public interest and provide maximum benefits to the people of Alaska and to the extent that management is consistent with the statutory subsistence priority; and

(3) insofar as the following management steps are consistent with the statutory subsistence priority:

(A) from July 1 through August 15, salmon stocks which normally move in upper Cook Inlet will be managed primarily for commercial uses;

(B) after August 15, salmon stocks moving to spawning areas in Kenai Peninsula drainages will be managed primarily for recreational uses; and

(C) salmon stocks other than those spawning in Kenai Peninsula drainages will be managed primarily for commercial uses.

(b) Consistent with (a) of this section, the department shall

(1) manage the upper Cook Inlet commercial salmon fisheries to minimize the incidental take of Susitna coho, late Kenai king and early Kenai coho salmon stocks;

(2) assist the board in setting optimal salmon harvest rates for all uses by monitoring upper Cook Inlet salmon fisheries to determine the interception of Susitna coho, late Kenai king, and early Kenai coho salmon stocks;

(3) maintain the sustained yield of more abundant pink, chum, and sockeye salmon stocks;

(4) insure that subsistence use priorities are met; and

(5) manage the Northern District commercial salmon fisheries, after August 15, to limit the harvest of coho salmon by limiting fishing time to regularly scheduled periods.

(c) In this section "upper Cook Inlet salmon stocks" means those salmon that move through the Northern and Central Districts as defined in 5 AAC 21.200(a) and (b) and spawn in waters draining into those districts.

The major changes occurring since 1995 are in section (2) where the direction on allocations by time period were removed and placed into step down plans. The problem that arises is in how to weigh the allocations of sockeye, pink and chum salmon managed primarily for commercial purposes while king and coho are managed primarily for recreational purposes during the same time period.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. However, the department does support the development of flexible management plans.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 116: 5 AAC 21.363. Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plan; 21.360. River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Cook Inlet Sportfishing Caucus

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would redefine the priority use of Upper Cook Inlet salmon stocks to allow all non-commercial users to get their "full capacity" of fish prior to any commercial fishery taking place.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Under current regulations the department manages most of the sockeye, pink and chum salmon stocks primarily for commercial uses and king and coho salmon stocks primarily for recreational purposes.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal may decrease the commercial salmon harvest or even close the commercial fishery until all other users are satisfied at the "full capacity" level. This proposal may also increase the non-commercial harvest of salmon and may result in escapement goals being consistently exceeded causing a reduction in potential future yields.

BACKGROUND: Prior to 1981 most salmon stocks were managed for commercial purposes, from 1981 until 1995 most stocks were managed for commercial purposes from July 1 to August 15 with certain exceptions and at other times for recreational purposes with certain exceptions. In 1996 sockeye, pink and chum stocks were to be managed for commercial purposes with the caveat that a reasonable opportunity be provided to other users and coho and king salmon stocks were managed for recreational purposes. Moreover the board has made several changes to the various management plans to address allocation of salmon stocks to various users.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. However, the department does support the development of flexible management plans.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 117: 5 AAC 21.363. Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai River Sportfishing Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would create a new subsection under 5 AAC 21.363 directing the department to manage salmon runs based solely on the wild stock component. Stocks that are enhanced with hatchery supplementation include Kenai, Kasilof, and Fish Creek sockeye salmon as well as several king and coho salmon stocks.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? There are no regulations that govern the treatment of hatchery fish with regards to escapement goals. The Policy for Sustainable Salmon Fisheries and Escapement Goal Policy also does not address this issue. The department treats these hatchery fish and escapement goals in a variety of ways, depending on circumstances and data sets available.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would have little if any effect.

BACKGROUND: Current goals for the Kasilof and Kenai Rivers include hatchery stocks. In the Kenai River, The Hidden Lake enhancement is an insignificant contribution to the inriver sonar count. The Hidden Lake hatchery contribution is subtracted from the escapement goal for the Kenai River late run sockeye salmon stocks. The harvest of Hidden Lake hatchery fish is unknown and therefore it is not subtracted. However, the contribution of Hidden Lake sockeye salmon is again insignificant in number.

In the Kasilof River, hatchery fish are included in the escapement goal. However, in January 2004, the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the enhancement project occurring on Tustumena Lake was a commercial enterprise and thus, violated the Wilderness Act. As a result, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service were no longer able to provide Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association with a permit to continue operations on Tustumena Lake. The last release occurred in 2004 and final hatchery fish will be returning in 2009. No broodstock has been taken since 2003.

Weir counts in Fish Creek date back to 1938. Counts during this time range from a high of 307,000 in 1940 to 3,000 in 1973. Because of a decline in escapements, a hatchery program was initiated in Fish Creek by the department's FRED division in 1975. The initial escapement goal adopted in 1982 was 50,000 fish. This goal was reviewed in 1992

and remained 50,000 fish counted through the weir. From 1975 to 1993 the state ran this hatchery program before transferring it to Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association in 1993.

Since 2002 the Fish Creek sustainable escapement goal has been based on the percentile approach (Bue and Hasbrouck *Unpublished*; Hasbrouck and Edmundson 2007) and applied to observed escapements from a time period prior to hatchery supplementation (1938-1978) so that the effects of supplementation on yields and subsequent escapement of this stock could be ignored. It was thought that a range of escapements from 20,000 to 70,000 fish would utilize available spawning areas, produce adequate numbers of juvenile salmon that would not tax the productive capacity of the lake, and sustain yields into the future.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. The Kasilof River sockeye salmon stocking program is already terminated, the effects of the Fish Creek program are still being evaluated and the program may end in the very near future.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 125: 5 AAC 21.320(b)(1). Weekly fishing periods; 5 AAC 21.331. Gillnet specifications and operations; 5 AAC 21.358. Northern District Salmon Management Plan. 5 AAC 21.360(b)(1),(c). Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan; 5 AAC 21.363. Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plan; 5 AAC 21.365. Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan; and 5 AAC 77.525. Personal use salmon fishery.

PROPOSED BY: Brent M. Western

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal seeks to change a suite of regulations for Upper Cook Inlet salmon fisheries. These proposed changes include, but are not limited to, using 3 million sockeye salmon as a trigger point instead of the now 3 tiered regulations, increase the amount of useable gillnet gear, add a commercial fishing period, directs the department to manage for escapement goals, and changes escapement and inriver goals.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Regulations cited above are lengthy and cannot be effectively stated below. They can be found under Chapter 21, Cook Inlet Area, and Chapter 77, Personal Use Salmon Fishery.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would restructure current management plans. Depending on the actions taken, effects could range from a reallocation of sockeye salmon to all user groups, increase efficiency of commercial fishermen, prioritze use of sockeye salmon, and lower escapement goals.

BACKGROUND: The complexity of Upper Cook Inlet management plans has evolved over the years as the Board of Fisheries has struggled to balance the allocation needs and desires of the various user groups.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. However, the department does support the development of flexible management plans.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 133: 5 AAC 21.363. Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plan. (This proposal citation should be 21.310, Fishing Seasons)

PROPOSED BY: Danny Thompson

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would specify that from June 20 to August 20 salmon stocks in Cook Inlet will be managed primarily for "high quality commercial uses".

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The commercial drift fishery begins on the third Monday in June or June 19, whichever is later, and remains open until it is closed by emergency order. After August 10 the fishery is moved to the west side of the inlet.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? The effects of this proposal are dependant on instructions from the BOF.

BACKGROUND: Prior to 1978, all salmon stocks in UCI were managed primarily for commercial uses as the recreational use of these stocks was small. In 1978, the BOF passed the first rendition of the Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plan as an uncodified policy. That policy was challenged in court and overturned. In 1981 however, it was passed into regulation. From 1981 to 1996 it remained relatively unchanged and directed the department to manage most stocks returning to UCI prior to July 1st "primarily" for recreational uses. From July 1 to August 15 most stocks were managed "primarily" for commercial uses with certain exceptions. After August 15, salmon stocks moving to the Kenai Peninsula drainages were managed for recreational purposes while all other stocks were managed for commercial purposes. In addition, in managing the commercial fishery, the department was instructed to "minimize" the harvest of certain recreationally important stocks such as Kenai River king and coho stocks. In 1996, the plan was changed to management priority by stocks; sockeye, pink and chum stocks were to be managed for commercial purposes with the caveat that a reasonable opportunity be provided to other users and coho and king salmon stocks were managed for recreational purposes.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. However, if passed, "high quality" would need to be defined.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

Central District Drift Gillnet Management Plan

PROPOSAL 160: 5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: United Cook Inlet Drift Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would delete mandatory restrictions during July that pertain to drift gillnet time and area. Commercial fishing would occur during regular periods and additional time or restrictions would occur by emergency order if necessary and be implemented by the department to meet escapement goals.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Central District commercial drift gillnet fishery is open for weekly fishing periods from 7:00 a.m. Monday until 7:00 p.m. Monday and from 7:00 a.m. Thursday until 7:00 p.m. Thursday. Commercial drift gillnet fishing periods may be modified by emergency order. Commercial fishing is determined by run strength, area and dates. The fishing season opens the third Monday in June or June 19, whichever is later. From July 9 through July 15, fishing during the two regular fishing periods is restricted to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections and Drift Gillnet Area 1 in order to conserve northern bound sockeye salmon. Commercial drift fishing is dependent on dates and run strength to the Kenai River. For example, from July 16 through July 31, at run strengths of 2,000,000 to 4,000,000 sockeye salmon to the Kenai River, fishing during the two regular 12-hour fishing periods is restricted to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections and Drift Gillnet Areas 1 and 2.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Effects of this proposal would be dependent on the run strength and the management actions necessary to manage the fishery.

BACKGROUND: In 2005, the BOF established a new management plan for the drift gillnet fishery, namely the Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan. In this plan, the Board of Fisheries provided for earlier opening dates, largely in response to strong Kasilof River sockeye salmon runs during the past nine years. In that same meeting, the closing date was moderately relaxed due to the recent strong coho salmon runs. However, because of the poor to below average runs of sockeye salmon returning to Northern Cook Inlet, the department has implemented restrictions and/or closures in each of the last three seasons. To complicate matters, average to strong runs have occurred in both the Kenai and Kasilof Rivers.

As mentioned above, the Kenai River sockeye salmon preseason forecast and in-season run assessments determines the amount of fishing time and window closures for the start of the commercial fishing season. This preseason forecast has been correct once since these plans were implemented prior to the 1999 season. Only this past season, 2007, was in the correct tier from beginning to end.

Since 1999, the Kenai River in-river run goal has been exceeded 5 of 9 years and within the goal four times. During that same time period, the Kenai River optimum escapement goal (OEG) has been below twice, within four times, and exceeded three times. The Kasilof River biological escapement goal has been exceeded 8 of 9 years. The current OEG of 150,000 to 300,000 sockeye salmon was established in 2001 and has been exceeded 6 of 7 years. The sustainable escapement goal for Yentna River sockeye salmon is 90,000-160,000 fish. Since 2002, the goal has been exceeded once, met once, and below four times.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. However, the department does support the development of flexible management plans.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 161: 5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: United Cook Inlet Drift Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would delete the current management plan in regulation. Fishing periods would occur under 5 AAC 21.310 Fishing Seasons and 5 AAC 21.320 Weekly Fishing Periods and adjustments made to that fishing schedule based on in-season run assessments through emergency order authority.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Central District commercial drift gillnet fishery is open for weekly fishing periods from 7:00 a.m. Monday until 7:00 p.m. Monday and from 7:00 a.m. Thursday until 7:00 p.m. Thursday. Commercial drift gillnet fishing periods may be modified by emergency order. Commercial fishing is determined by run strength, area and dates. The fishing season opens the third Monday in June or June 19, whichever is later. From July 9 through July 15, fishing during the two regular fishing periods is restricted to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections and Drift Gillnet Area 1 in order to conserve northern bound sockeye salmon. Commercial drift fishing is dependent on dates and run strength to the Kenai River. For example, from July 16 through July 31, at run strengths of 2,000,000 to 4,000,000 sockeye salmon to the Kenai River, fishing

during the two regular 12-hour fishing periods is restricted to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections and Drift Gillnet Areas 1 and 2.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Effects of this proposal would be dependent on the run strength and the management actions taken to manage the fishery. In essence the fishing restrictions and liberalizations would be deleted from regulation and the fishery would be managed for abundance by emergency order.

BACKGROUND: In 2005, the BOF established a new management plan for the drift gillnet fishery, namely the Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan. In this plan, the Board of Fisheries provided for earlier opening dates, largely in response to strong Kasilof River sockeye salmon runs during the past nine years. In that same meeting, the closing date was moderately relaxed due to the recent strong coho salmon runs. However, because of the poor to below average runs of sockeye salmon returning to Northern Cook Inlet, the department has implemented restrictions and/or closures in each of the last three seasons. To complicate matters, average to strong runs have occurred in both the Kenai and Kasilof Rivers.

As mentioned above, the Kenai River sockeye salmon preseason forecast determines the amount of fishing time and window closures for the start of the commercial fishing season. This preseason forecast has been correct once since these plans were implemented prior to the 1999 season. Only this past season, 2007, was in the correct tier.

Since 1999, the Kenai River in-river run goal has been exceeded 5 of 9 years and within the goal four times. During that same time period, the Kenai River optimum escapement goal (OEG) has been below twice, within four times, and exceeded three times. The Kasilof River biological escapement goal has been exceeded 8 of 9 years. The current OEG of 150,000 to 300,000 sockeye salmon was established in 2001 and has been exceeded 6 of 7 years. The sustainable escapement goal for Yentna River sockeye salmon is 90,000-160,000 fish. Since 2002, the goal has been exceeded once, met once, and below four times.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. However, the department does support the development of flexible management plans.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 162: 5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: John Higgins

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would delete the current management plan in regulation. Fishing periods would occur under 5 AAC 21.310 Fishing Seasons and 5 AAC 21.320 Weekly Fishing Periods and adjustments made to that fishing schedule based on in-season run assessments through emergency order authority.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Central District commercial drift gillnet fishery is open for weekly fishing periods from 7:00 a.m. Monday until 7:00 p.m. Monday and from 7:00 a.m. Thursday until 7:00 p.m. Thursday. Commercial drift gillnet fishing periods may be modified by emergency order. Commercial fishing is determined by run strength, area and dates. The fishing season opens the third Monday in June or June 19, whichever is later. From July 9 through July 15, fishing during the two regular fishing periods is restricted to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections and Drift Gillnet Area 1 in order to conserve northern bound sockeye salmon. Commercial drift fishing is dependent on dates and run strength to the Kenai River. For example, from July 16 through July 31, at run strengths of 2,000,000 to 4,000,000 sockeye salmon to the Kenai River, fishing during the two regular 12-hour fishing periods is restricted to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections and Drift Gillnet Areas 1 and 2.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Effects of this proposal would be dependent on the run strength and the management actions taken to manage the fishery. In essence the fishing restrictions and liberalizations would be deleted from regulation and the fishery would be managed for abundance by emergency order.

BACKGROUND: In 2005, the BOF established a new management plan for the drift gillnet fishery, namely the Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan. In this plan, the Board of Fisheries provided for earlier opening dates, largely in response to strong Kasilof River sockeye salmon runs during the past nine years. In that same meeting, the closing date was moderately relaxed due to the recent strong coho salmon runs. However, because of the poor to below average runs of sockeye salmon returning to Northern Cook Inlet, the department has implemented restrictions and/or closures in each of the last three seasons. To complicate matters, average to strong runs have occurred in both the Kenai and Kasilof Rivers.

As mentioned above, the Kenai River sockeye salmon preseason forecast determines the amount of fishing time and window closures for the start of the commercial fishing season. This preseason forecast has been correct once since these plans were implemented prior to the 1999 season. Only this past season, 2007, was in the correct tier for the entire season.

Since 1999, the Kenai River in-river run goal has been exceeded 5 of 9 years and within the goal four times. During that same time period, the Kenai River optimum escapement goal (OEG) has been below twice, within four times, and exceeded three times. The Kasilof River biological escapement goal has been exceeded 8 of 9 years. The current OEG of 150,000 to 300,000 sockeye salmon was established in 2001 and has been

exceeded 6 of 7 years. The sustainable escapement goal for Yentna River sockeye salmon is 90,000-160,000 fish. Since 2002, the goal has been exceeded once, met once, and below four times.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. However, the department does support the development of flexible management plans.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 89: 5 AAC 21.310(b)(2)(c)(iii). Fishing seasons.

PROPOSED BY: John McCombs

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? It is unclear exactly what this proposal requests. However, it is thought that the proposal requests area managers to have the ability to open and close the drift gillnet fishery as necessary by emergency order.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Currently, 5 AAC 21.320 establishes fishing periods for drifting in UCI and 5 AAC 21.353 places restrictions on several of these regular periods and further limits open areas between July 9 and August 10. After August 10 open areas are restricted to the south west portion of the inlet and within 5 miles of shore on the west side. The commercial fishing season is currently closed by emergence order.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? As written it is unclear if this proposal would have any effect on the current fishery. Harvests rates of salmon would be dependent upon management actions inseason.

BACKGROUND: From 1978 until 1996 the drift fishery in Cook Inlet was managed from June 25 until August 15 in the Central District of UCI. After August 15 the fishery was closed within 5 miles of the eastern shoreline and the remainder of the inlet was open for regular periods until closed by emergency order. Beginning in 1990, the department began restricting a single regular drift fishing period by emergency order to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections to lower the exploitation rate on Susitna River sockeye stocks. In 1996 the BOF added a second restriction in regulation to restrict a period after July 25 to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections. In 1997, as a result of a department petition for coho concerns in the Kenai River, the BOF closed the drift fishery beginning August 9. In 1999 the BOF added a second restricted period to occur immediately before July 25. In addition, the BOF placed into regulation a restriction in early July that had been previously implemented annually by emergency order. In 2005 the Board relaxed many of these restrictions and allowed the drift fishery on the west side after August 10. This was done to alleviate some of the problems the department was having managing for escapement goals and to allocate fish to the drift fishery.

Poor returns of coho salmon to Upper Cook Inlet in 1997 and 1999, coupled with not meeting escapement goals prompted the Board to reduce the coho salmon sport fisheries on select Northern Cook Inlet streams. Coho salmon runs to Northern Cook Inlet increased beginning in 2000. The Board took action in 2005 to return the daily bag and possession limit to the original 3 per day/6 in possession along westside Susitna River tributaries, excluding Alexander Creek. Exploitation rates for Kenai River coho salmon were high (84%) under the previous Kenai River Coho salmon management plan that allowed a 3 fish bag limit. Under the 2000 management plan, which included a 2 fish bag limit, exploitation ranged from 35% to 47% from 2000 to 2004. The liberalizations in 2005 are thought to have likely increased exploitation into the high 40% to low 50% range from 2005-2007.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. However, the department does support the development of flexible management plans.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 163: 5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Northern District Set Netters Association of Cook Inlet

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would restrict the commercial drift gillnet fleet to the Kasilof and Kenai sections for two regular periods between July 9 and 15 and two additional periods from July 16 to July 31 in runs under 4,000,000 sockeye salmon to the Kenai River. In returns of over 4,000,000 there would be two restrictions from July 9 to July 15 only. It would also create an area that could not be fished when the Northern District is closed to conserve Susitna River sockeye salmon.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Central District commercial drift gillnet fishery is open for weekly fishing periods from 7:00 a.m. Monday until 7:00 p.m. Monday and from 7:00 a.m. Thursday until 7:00 p.m. Thursday. Commercial drift gillnet fishing periods may be modified by emergency order. Commercial fishing is determined by run strength, area and dates. The fishing season opens the third Monday in June or June 19, whichever is later. From July 9 through July 15, fishing during the two regular fishing periods is restricted to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections and Drift Gillnet Area 1 in order to conserve northern bound sockeye salmon. Commercial drift fishing is dependent on dates and run strength to the Kenai River. For example, from July 16 through July 31, at run strengths of 2,000,000 to 4,000,000 sockeye salmon to the Kenai River, fishing during the two regular 12-hour fishing periods is restricted to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections and Drift Gillnet Areas 1 and 2.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would return the drift restriction from July 9 to July15 to what it was in 1999 and add an additional restriction during this time frame. In addition, it would mandate that the two restrictions from July 16 to 31 be much more restrictive than what was in effect in 1999. The drift gillnet fleet's effectiveness would be reduced and controlling escapements to the Kasilof and Kenai Rivers would be compromised. If these restrictions were adopted, the drift fleet would bare a disproportionate share of the conservation burden. In all likelihood, escapements would consistently be exceeded in the Kenai and Kasilof Rivers by significant amounts absent liberalizations in the Upper Subdistrict set gillnets fishery.

BACKGROUND: In 2005, the BOF established a new management plan for the drift gillnet fishery, namely the Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan. In this plan, the Board of Fisheries provided for earlier opening dates, largely in response to strong Kasilof River sockeye salmon runs during the past nine years. In that same meeting, the closing date was moderately relaxed due to the recent strong coho salmon runs. However, because of the poor to below average runs of sockeye salmon returning to Northern Cook Inlet, the department has implemented restrictions and/or closures in each of the last three seasons. To complicate matters, average to strong runs have occurred in both the Kenai and Kasilof Rivers.

Since 1999, the Kenai River in-river run goal has been exceeded 5 of 9 years and within the goal four times. During that same time period, the Kenai River optimum escapement goal has been below twice, within four times, and exceeded three times. The Kasilof River biological escapement goal has been exceeded 8 of 9 years. The current OEG of 150,000 to 300,000 sockeye salmon was established in 2001 and has been exceeded 6 of 7 years. The sustainable escapement goal for Yentna River sockeye salmon is 90,000-160,000 fish. Since 2002, the goal has been exceeded once, met once, and below four times. The Fish Creek sockeye salmon sustainable escapement goal has been exceeded twice, within three times, and below once in the last 6 years.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. However, the department is **OPPOSED** to regulatory actions that may hinder the department's ability to manage these fisheries to achieve established salmon escapement goals.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 164: 5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai River Sportfishing Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would add specific language to the drift gillnet management plan to address the period from August 1 to August 10.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Central District commercial drift gillnet fishery is open for weekly fishing periods from 7:00 a.m. Monday until 7:00 p.m. Monday and from 7:00 a.m. Thursday until 7:00 p.m. The fishing season from July 9 to July 31 has multiple restrictions based on the sockeye salmon run size to the Kenai River. After August 11, fishing is restricted to areas on the west side of Upper Cook Inlet. From August 1 to August 10, fishing periods occur under 5 AAC 21.310 Fishing Seasons and 5 AAC 21.320 Weekly Fishing Periods unless altered by Emergency Order.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would allow more time to implement the drift restrictions occurring July 16 to 31 to be from July 16 to August 10. The purpose of these restrictions is primarily to pass sockeye salmon through the Central District to the Northern District.

BACKGROUND: In 2005, the BOF established a new management plan for the drift gillnet fishery, namely the Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan. In this plan, the BOF moved numerous restrictions that were distributed in many plans to a single plan. In addition, the BOF provided for earlier opening dates, largely in response to strong Kasilof River sockeye salmon runs in the past nine years and additional fishing time at the end of the season in response to good coho returns.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. Specific instructions outlined by the BOF during this time period is unnecessary. The time period from June 19 until July 9 is also not covered under the plan as the BOF did not institute specific instructions during this time frame. That being, the regular fishing schedule applies. In addition, by moving the drift restrictions later into August, the purpose of the current restrictions would not accomplish their goal of passing additional fish to the Northern District.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 165: 5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai River Sportfishing Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal seeks to ensure the provision that allowed the Chinitna Bay commercial fishing to be opened by emergency order after August 10 will sunset after the 2007 season.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Through the 2007 fishing season, Chinitna Bay may be opened by emergency order. Drift Gillnet Areas 3 and 4 are open for regular periods until closed by emergency order.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would not affect Chinitna Bay but would impact the west side drift gillnet fishery by closing it on August 10. This proposal would reduce commercial harvests by an unknown amount.

BACKGROUND: In 2005, the BOF established a new management plan for the drift gillnet fishery, namely the Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan. In this plan, the Board of Fisheries provided for earlier opening dates, largely in response to strong Kasilof River sockeye salmon runs during the past nine years. It also relaxed the drift restrictions that were put into effect for coho conservation that were deemed to be unnecessary. After August 10 the drift fishery is relatively small scale with generally less than 20 participants. Harvests in this fishery consist of pink, chum, coho and sockeye salmon. The sport fishery in this area during mid August is also relatively small, however becomes more popular as coho salmon returns build in the later portion of August and into September. Salmon escapements to these streams do not appear to be in jeopardy.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. If the BOF does not take action on this proposal, the provision to allow the Chinitna Bay commercial fishing to be opened by emergency order after August 10 will no longer exist.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 91: 5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: John McCombs

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would repeal the restrictions in the plan for drift gillnets during July 16-31. These restrictions have been moved from 5 AAC 21.360 to 5 AAC 21.353.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? In 5 AAC 21.353 the drift gillnet fishery is restricted to the Kenai, Kasilof and possibly drift areas one and two, depending on run strength for two regular periods from July 16 to July 31.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? These two restricted periods would be rescinded, increasing the harvest of salmon stocks moving through Upper Cook Inlet during this time frame.

BACKGROUND: In 1996, the BOF added a restriction in regulation to restrict a single period immediately after July 25 to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections. In 1999 the BOF added a second restricted period to occur immediately before July 25. In 2005 the BOF

relaxed these restrictions to include the possibility of adding drift areas one and two. These actions were taken to provide the department additional tools to manage for escapement goals.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

COMMITTEE C: Pink, Kenai, and Kasilof Management Plans (CF)
(Total proposals: 53)
Cook Inlet Pink Salmon Mgmt. Plan: 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159
Kenai Late Run Sockeye Salmon Mgmt. Plan: 187, 188, 204, 118, 189, 190, 191, 192, 195, 200, 202, 194, 196, 197, 198, 199, 201, 203, 205, 209, 210, 206, 207, 208, 193
Kasilof Sockeye Salmon Mgmt. Plan: 166, 167, 168, 169, 177, 180, 178, 179, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 170, 171

COOK INLET PINK SALMON

PROPOSAL 153: 5 AAC 21.356. Cook Inlet Pink Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would add a new section that would put back into regulation the allowable fishing area for the pink salmon fishery.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The department shall manage the Cook Inlet pink salmon stocks primarily for commercial uses to provide an economic yield from the harvest of these salmon resources based on abundance. The department shall also manage the commercial pink salmon fishery to minimize the harvest of Northern District and Kenai River coho salmon stocks.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? None. Currently, the department uses its emergency order authority to define the fishing area. This proposal would place the fishing area description into regulation so that the legal fishing area will be described and known by everyone.

BACKGROUND: This plan was put in regulation in 2002 to allow the harvest of abundant pink salmon stocks. This fishery was again adopted by the Board of Fisheries in 2005. However, at that time the description of the fishing area was omitted. Since then, the department has had to describe the open area by emergency order.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: the department submitted and **SUPPORTS** this proposal. This proposal is considered housekeeping.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 154: 5 AAC 21.356. Cook Inlet Pink Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Dyer VanDevere

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would open the Cook Inlet pink salmon season roughly 9 days earlier and would add three additional fishing periods to

the three now currently allowed in regulation.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? In even-numbered years, after August 10, the department will open, by emergency order, three additional fishing periods for Upper Cook Inlet pink salmon stocks. These periods occur from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on the first Monday, Wednesday, or Friday after August 9. The participating permit holder must register by obtaining a pink salmon permit from the department by August 9 at the department office in Soldotna or Homer.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would increase the harvest rate of pink salmon in even-numbered years. It would also increase the harvest of sockeye, coho and chum salmon.

BACKGROUND: This plan was formulated and put in regulation in 2002 to allow the harvest of abundant pink salmon stocks. These stocks were returning on even years but were unharvested in large part because of restrictions on fishing time and seasons in the two fisheries that are the primary harvesters of this stock, the drift fleet and east-side set gillnet fishery. Most of these restrictions were put in place to conserve coho salmon bound for the Northern District and the Kenai River after two poor returns in 1997 and 1999. Since the restrictions were put in place, coho returns have been sustainable.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 155: 5 AAC 21.356. Cook Inlet Pink Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai Peninsula Fishermen's Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow the use of set gillnets to harvest pink salmon in Upper Cook Inlet and would return the regular season closing date on the east side for set gillnets back to August 15. It is unclear if three additional periods are requested or if the season is extended to August 15.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? There are no set gillnet regulations for pink salmon management in Upper Cook Inlet.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would increase the harvest rate of pink salmon in even-numbered years. It would also increase the harvest of sockeye, coho and chum salmon.

BACKGROUND: This plan was formulated and put in regulation in 2002 to allow the harvest of abundant pink salmon stocks. These stocks were returning on even years but

were unharvested in large part because of restrictions on fishing time and seasons in the two fisheries that are the primary harvesters of this stock, the drift fleet and east-side set gillnet fishery. Most of these restrictions were put in place to conserve coho salmon bound for the Northern District and the Kenai River. Since the restrictions were put in place, coho returns have typically been sustainable.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 156: 5 AAC 21.356. Cook Inlet Pink Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: South K-Beach Independent Fishermen's Alliance

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow the use of set gillnets to harvest pink salmon in Upper Cook Inlet under the Cook Inlet Pink Salmon Management Plan.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? There are no set gillnet regulations specific for pink salmon management in Upper Cook Inlet other than what harvests occur during the regular season. The Cook Inlet Pink Salmon Management Plan addresses pink salmon harvest by drift gillnets only.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would increase the harvest rate of pink salmon in even-numbered years. It would also increase the harvest of sockeye, coho and chum salmon.

BACKGROUND: This plan was formulated and put in regulation in 2002 to allow the harvest of abundant pink salmon stocks. These stocks were returning on even years but were unharvested in large part because of restrictions on fishing time and seasons in the two fisheries that are the primary harvesters of this stock, the drift fleet and east-side set gillnet fishery. Most of these restrictions were put in place to conserve coho salmon bound for the Northern District and the Kenai River after two poor returns in 1997 and 1999. Since the restrictions were put in place, coho returns have been sustainable.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 157: 5 AAC 21.356. Cook Inlet Pink Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Central Peninsula Advisory Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would delete all aspects of this plan other than the first sentence of the language that is already in regulation.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The department shall manage the Cook Inlet pink salmon stocks primarily for commercial uses to provide an economic yield from the harvest of these salmon resources based on abundance. The department shall also manage the commercial pink salmon fishery to minimize the harvest of Northern District and Kenai River coho salmon stocks.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would delete the three periods currently in regulation for drift gillnets which have generated little if any additional pink salmon harvest as the area is not conducive to harvesting pink salmon which are generally closer to the beaches along the east side. The effects of this proposal could result in additional fishing time along the east side of the Central District during even years increasing the harvest of pink and coho salmon.

BACKGROUND: In 1999 the BOF restricted any pink salmon fisheries until a pink plan was developed. This plan was formulated and put in regulation in 2002 to allow the harvest of abundant pink salmon stocks during even years only. This plan allocated all the additional pink salmon harvest to drift gillnets during three periods in a specified area of the Central District. These pink stocks were returning on even years but were unharvested in large part because of restrictions on fishing time and seasons in the two fisheries that are the primary harvesters of this stock, the drift fleet and east-side set gillnet fishery. Most of these restrictions were put in place to conserve coho salmon bound for the Northern District and the Kenai River after two poor returns in 1997 and 1999. Since the restrictions were put in place, coho returns have been sustainable.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. However, if passed as written without further instructions, a more appropriate placement would be in the Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plan.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 158: 5 AAC 21.356. Cook Inlet Pink Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Douglas F. Bloom

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow the use of set gillnets to harvest pink salmon in Upper Cook Inlet and would not restrict drift gillnets from fishing near shore.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? There are no set gillnet regulations for pink salmon management in Upper Cook Inlet. Pertaining to drift gillnets, in even-numbered years, after August 10, the department will open, by emergency order, three additional fishing periods for Upper Cook Inlet pink salmon stocks. These periods occur from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on the first Monday, Wednesday, or Friday after August 10. The participating permit holder must register by obtaining a pink salmon permit from the department by August 9 at the department office in Soldotna or Homer.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would increase the harvest rate of pink salmon in even-numbered years and allow for a set gillnet fishery in addition to drift gillnets currently allowed. It would also increase the harvest of sockeye, coho and chum salmon.

BACKGROUND: This plan was formulated and put in regulation in 2002 to allow the harvest of abundant pink salmon stocks. These stocks were returning on even years but were unharvested in large part because of restrictions on fishing time and seasons in the two fisheries that are the primary harvesters of this stock, the drift fleet and east-side set gillnet fishery. Most of these restrictions were put in place to conserve coho salmon bound for the Northern District and the Kenai River after two poor returns in 1997 and 1999. Since the restrictions were put in place, coho returns have been sustainable.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 159: 5 AAC 21.356. Cook Inlet Pink Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: John Higgins

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would delete 5 AAC 21.356, Cook Inlet Pink Salmon Management Plan, in its entirety.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The department shall manage the Cook Inlet pink salmon stocks primarily for commercial uses to provide an economic yield from the harvest of these salmon resources based on abundance. The department shall also manage the commercial pink salmon fishery to minimize the harvest of Northern District and Kenai River coho salmon stocks.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would delete the three periods currently in regulation for drift gillnets which have generated little if any additional pink salmon harvest as the area is not conducive to harvesting pink salmon which are generally closer to the beaches along the east side. The

effects of this proposal could result in additional fishing time along the east side of the Central District during even years increasing the harvest of pink and coho salmon.

BACKGROUND: This plan was formulated and put in regulation in 2002 to allow the harvest of abundant pink salmon stocks. These stocks were returning on even years but were unharvested in large part because of restrictions on fishing time and seasons in the two fisheries that are the primary harvesters of this stock, the drift fleet and east-side set gillnet fishery. Most of these restrictions were put in place to conserve coho salmon bound for the Northern District and the Kenai River after two poor returns in 1997 and 1999. Since the restrictions were put in place, coho returns have been sustainable.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

KENAI LATE RUN SOCKEYE SALMON MANAGEMENT PLAN

PROPOSAL 187: 5 AAC 21.360 (b)(1), (c). Kenai River Late Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: United Cook Inlet Drift Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would make substantial changes to the current management plan. Significant changes would be to change the current three tiers to two and within those tiers, change the inriver goals and create allocations to sport and P/U fishers below the sonar counter at mile 19. It would also ask the board to nullify the current optimal escapement goal in language, and for the board to adopt an optimal escapement goal of 400,000 to 700,000 sockeye salmon.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon stocks are managed primarily for commercial uses. The department shall also manage the commercial fisheries to minimize the harvest of Northern District and Kenai River coho and late-run Kenai River king salmon stocks to provide personal use, sport, and guided sport fishermen with an opportunity to harvest these resources. The Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon fisheries shall be managed to meet an optimum escapement goal range of 500,000 - 1,000,000 late-run sockeye salmon, achieve inriver goals, and to distribute the escapement of sockeye salmon throughout the OEG range. The current sustainable escapement goal is 500,000 to 800,000 sockeye salmon and is determined by the department.

Based on preseason forecasts and inseason projections of the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon return, the run will be managed as follows: At run strengths of less than 2,000,000 sockeye salmon, the department shall manage for an inriver goal range of

650,000-850,000 sockeye salmon past the sonar counter at river mile 19 and will fish regular weekly fishing periods and allow additional fishing of no more than 24-hours per week.

At run strengths of 2,000,000 to 4,000,000, the department shall manage for an inriver goal range of 750,000-950,000 sockeye salmon past the sonar counter and allow additional fishing of no more than 51-hours per week. The set gillnet fishery will be closed for one 36-hour period per week beginning between 7:00 p.m. Thursday and 7:00 a.m. Friday and for an additional 24-hour period during the same week.

At run strengths greater than 4,000,000, the department shall manage for an inriver goal range of 850,000-1,100,000 sockeye salmon past the sonar counter and allow additional fishing of no more than 84-hours per week. The set gillnet fishery will be closed for one 36-hour period per week, beginning between 7:00 p.m. Thursday and 7:00 a.m. Friday.

Subject to the requirement of achieving the lower end of the optimal escapement goal, the department shall manage the sport fishery on the Kenai River, except that portion of the Kenai River from its confluence with the Russian River to an ADF&G regulatory marker located 1,800 yards downstream as follows; fishing will occur seven days per week, 24 hours per day; and the bag and possession limit for the sport fishery is three sockeye salmon unless the department determines that the abundance of late-run sockeye exceeds 2,000,000 salmon, at which time the commissioner may, by emergency order, increase the bag and possession limit to six sockeye salmon.

Subject to the requirement of achieving the lower end of the optimal escapement goal, the department shall provide for a personal use dip net fishery in the lower Kenai River In the personal use fishery salmon may be taken by dip net in the Kenai River as follows: from July 10 through July 31, seven days per week, from 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.; the commissioner may extend, by emergency order, the personal use fishery to 24-hours per day if the department determines that the abundance of the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon is greater than 2 million fish; the annual limit for each personnel use salmon fishing permit is 25 salmon for the head of a household and 10 salmon for each dependent of the permit holder.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would change the three tiers to two tiers. Under the three tiered management plan, the department's forecast and scripted management plan based on that forecast has been correct once in 9 years by the end of the season. If those same forecasts were to be applied to the proposed two tier plan, the department's forecast and scripted management plans would have been correct 7 of those 9 years (78%). Management strategies implemented at the beginning of the season of these 9 years would only have been changed twice.

Another significant change would be an allocation of sockeye salmon to sport and personal use fishers below the sonar counter based on the preseason forecast. The proposed inriver goal would also increase the allocation of sockeye salmon to

commercial users and decrease the allocation to sport fisheries above the sonar site and would result in closures to the sport fishery above the sonar site. It may also require a sport fish creel census survey below the sonar site.

BACKGROUND: The first restrictions on additional time in the Upper Subdistrict were put in place in 1999. At that time there was a mandatory 24-hour closed period on Fridays, often called a "window". In addition, there was a second 24-hour window if the in-river king salmon sport fishery was restricted. In 1996, a limit on additional fishing time of no more than a single extra period per week was put in place in the Kalgin Island Subdistrict in the Packers Creek Sockeye Salmon Management Plan. Also in 1996, restrictions were implemented in the Northern District set gillnet fishery; additional time, other than regular periods, was prohibited after August 15, and two regular periods were restricted to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections for the drift fishery in the Northern District Salmon Management Plan. A third regular drift gillnet period after July 25 was restricted in 1999 to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections. In 2002, additional fishing time in the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery was limited to either 36, 48 or 60 hours of additional time per week and a mandatory closed period of 24, 36 or 48 hours depending on run strength was implemented. For runs of less than 2 million the number of additional hours is restricted to no more than 24 hours of additional fishing time per week. For runs between 2 and 4 million there is a limit on additional time of no more than 36 hours per week and there is a mandatory closed period of 48 hours per week. For runs of over 4 million there is a limit on additional time of no more than 60 hours per week and a mandatory closed period of 36 hours per week. Substantial changes (outlined above) were again adopted at the 2005 Board of Fisheries meeting.

Since 1999 the Kenai River in-river run goal has been exceeded 5 of 9 years and within the goal four times. During that same time period, the Kenai River was below the optimum escapement goal (OEG) twice, within the OEG four times, and was exceeded three times. From 2001 to 2006, the SEG has been below once, within once, and exceeded in the past four years.

A biological escapement goal (BEG) of 500,000-800,000 spawners for Kenai River sockeye salmon was adopted by the department in 1999. The goal was met or exceeded three of the past four years. In 2005 the department's escapement goal review committee recommended no change to the escapement goal range of 500,000-800,000 fish; however, the committee recommended changing the goal type from a BEG to a SEG.

Kenai River late run sockeye salmon sport fish harvests from 1985-2006 have ranged from 57,213 to 294,287 fish, with a 10-year average (1997-2006) of 224,758 fish. The harvest above the sonar site hasn't been below 100,000 fish since 1986. Sockeye salmon harvest from 2004 to 2006 averaged 228,652 fish for the Kenai River personal use dip net fishery. Effort and harvest in the 2006 Kenai River inriver fisheries was atypical due to a later than expected late return of sockeye salmon to the Kenai River. This resulted in closure and subsequent late season liberalization of the dip net fishery.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. However, the department does support the development of flexible management plans.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 188: 5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Wesley J. Humbyrd

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would make substantial changes to the current management plan. Significant changes would be to change the current three tiers to two and within those tiers, change the inriver goals and create allocations to sport and P/U fishers below the sonar counter at mile 19. It would also ask the board to nullify the current optimal escapement goal in language, and for the board to adopt an optimal escapement goal of 400,000 to 700.000 sockeye salmon.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon stocks are managed primarily for commercial uses. The department shall also manage the commercial fisheries to minimize the harvest of Northern District and Kenai River coho and late-run Kenai River king salmon stocks to provide personal use, sport, and guided sport fishermen with an opportunity to harvest these resources. The Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon fisheries shall be managed to meet an optimum escapement goal range of 500,000 - 1,000,000 late-run sockeye salmon, achieve inriver goals, and to distribute the escapement of sockeye salmon throughout the OEG range. The current sustainable escapement goal is 500,000 to 800,000 sockeye salmon and is determined by the department.

Based on preseason forecasts and inseason projections of the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon return, the run will be managed as follows: At run strengths of less than 2,000,000 sockeye salmon, the department shall manage for an inriver goal range of 650,000-850,000 sockeye salmon past the sonar counter at river mile 19 and will fish regular weekly fishing periods and allow additional fishing of no more than 24-hours per week.

At run strengths of 2,000,000 to 4,000,000, the department shall manage for an inriver goal range of 750,000-950,000 sockeye salmon past the sonar counter and allow additional fishing of no more than 51-hours per week. The set gillnet fishery will be closed for one 36-hour period per week beginning between 7:00 p.m. Thursday and 7:00 a.m. Friday and for an additional 24-hour period during the same week.

At run strengths greater than 4,000,000, the department shall manage for an inriver goal range of 850,000-1,100,000 sockeye salmon past the sonar counter and allow additional

fishing of no more than 84-hours per week. The set gillnet fishery will be closed for one 36-hour period per week, beginning between 7:00 p.m. Thursday and 7:00 a.m. Friday.

Subject to the requirement of achieving the lower end of the optimal escapement goal, the department shall manage the sport fishery on the Kenai River, except that portion of the Kenai River from its confluence with the Russian River to an ADF&G regulatory marker located 1,800 yards downstream as follows; fishing will occur seven days per week, 24 hours per day; and the bag and possession limit for the sport fishery is three sockeye salmon unless the department determines that the abundance of late-run sockeye exceeds 2,000,000 salmon, at which time the commissioner may, by emergency order, increase the bag and possession limit to six sockeye salmon.

Subject to the requirement of achieving the lower end of the optimal escapement goal, the department shall provide for a personal use dip net fishery in the lower Kenai River In the personal use fishery salmon may be taken by dip net in the Kenai River as follows: from July 10 through July 31, seven days per week, from 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.; the commissioner may extend, by emergency order, the personal use fishery to 24-hours per day if the department determines that the abundance of the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon is greater than 2 million fish; the annual limit for each personnel use salmon fishing permit is 25 salmon for the head of a household and 10 salmon for each dependent of the permit holder.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would change the three tiers to two tiers. Under the three tiered management plan, the department's forecast and scripted management plan based on that forecast has been correct once in 9 years by the end of the season. If those same forecasts were to be applied to the proposed two tier plan, the department's forecast and scripted management plans would have been correct 7 of those 9 years (78%). Management strategies implemented at the beginning of the season of these 9 years would only have been changed twice.

Another significant change would be an allocation of sockeye salmon to sport and personal use fishers below the sonar counter based on the preseason forecast. The proposed inriver goal would also increase the allocation of sockeye salmon to commercial users and decrease the allocation to sport fisheries above the sonar site and would result in closures to the sport fishery above the sonar site. It may also require a sport fish creel census survey below the sonar site.

BACKGROUND: The first restrictions on additional time in the Upper Subdistrict were put in place in 1999. At that time there was a mandatory 24-hour closed period on Fridays, often called a "window". In addition, there was a second 24-hour window if the in-river king salmon sport fishery was restricted. In 1996, a limit on additional fishing time of no more than a single extra period per week was put in place in the Kalgin Island Subdistrict in the Packers Creek Sockeye Salmon Management Plan. Also in 1996, restrictions were implemented in the Northern District set gillnet fishery; additional time, other than regular periods, was prohibited after August 15, and two regular periods were

restricted to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections for the drift fishery in the Northern District Salmon Management Plan. A third regular drift gillnet period after July 25 was restricted in 1999 to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections. In 2002, additional fishing time in the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery was limited to either 36, 48 or 60 hours of additional time per week and a mandatory closed period of 24, 36 or 48 hours depending on run strength was implemented. For runs of less than 2 million the number of additional hours is restricted to no more than 24 hours of additional fishing time per week. For runs between 2 and 4 million there is a limit on additional time of no more than 36 hours per week and there is a mandatory closed period of 48 hours per week. For runs of over 4 million there is a limit on additional time of no more than 60 hours per week and a mandatory closed period of 36 hours per week. Substantial changes (outlined above) were again adopted at the 2005 Board of Fisheries meeting.

Since 1999 the Kenai River in-river run goal has been exceeded 5 of 9 years and within the goal four times. During that same time period, the Kenai River was below the optimum escapement goal (OEG) twice, within the OEG four times, and was exceeded three times. From 2001 to 2006, the SEG has been below once, within once, and exceeded in the past four years.

A biological escapement goal (BEG) of 500,000-800,000 spawners for Kenai River sockeye salmon was adopted by the department in 1999. The goal was met or exceeded three of the past four years. In 2005 the department's escapement goal review committee recommended no change to the escapement goal range of 500,000-800,000 fish; however, the committee recommended changing the goal type from a BEG to a SEG.

Kenai River late run sockeye salmon sport fish harvests from 1985-2006 have ranged from 57,213 to 294,287 fish, with a 10-year average (1997-2006) of 224,758 fish. The harvest above the sonar site hasn't been below 100,000 fish since 1986. Sockeye salmon harvest from 2004 to 2006 averaged 228,652 fish for the Kenai River personal use dip net fishery. Effort and harvest in the 2006 Kenai River inriver fisheries was atypical due to a later than expected late return of sockeye salmon to the Kenai River. This resulted in closure and subsequent late season liberalization of the dip net fishery.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. However, the department does support the development of flexible management plans.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 204: 5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Central Peninsula Advisory Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would delete regulatory language from the management plan preamble that directs the department to manage the commercial fisheries to minimize the harvest of late-run Kenai River king salmon.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The department shall manage the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon stocks primarily for commercial uses based on abundance. The department shall also manage the commercial fisheries to minimize the harvest of Northern District coho, late-run Kenai River king, and Kenai River coho salmon stocks to provide personal use, sport, and guided sport fishermen with a reasonable opportunity to harvest salmon resources.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would likely have no effect on current harvest levels since fishing time, closed windows, and fishing periods are all described in the Kenai River Late Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan.

BACKGROUND: This minimized language first appeared in the Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plan in 1981. It has changed slightly over the years as the BOF has struggled to balance the allocation needs and desires of the various user groups.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 118: 5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: John McCombs

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would return the Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan commercial regulations to what they were in 1996.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon stocks are managed primarily for commercial uses. The department shall also manage the commercial fisheries to minimize the harvest of Northern District and Kenai River coho and late-run Kenai River king salmon stocks to provide personal use, sport, and guided sport fishermen with an opportunity to harvest these resources. The Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon fisheries shall be managed to meet an optimum escapement goal range of 500,000 - 1,000,000 late-run sockeye salmon, achieve inriver goals, and to distribute the escapement of sockeye salmon throughout the OEG range. The current sustainable escapement goal is 500,000 to 800,000 sockeye salmon and is determined by the department.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would return Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management to a plan where the inriver goal was 550,000 to 800,000 fish. No closed window(s) or a determined amount of fishing time were in effect at that time either. In the sport fishery, the department would manage the fishery consistent with achieving the BEG that was in effect at that time and the sport fish bag limit would be six fish. If additional liberalizations are allowed more Northern and Central district fish would likely be harvested. Estimates of less than 650,000 sockeye salmon past the sonar site would likely result in closure to the sport fishery.

BACKGROUND: The first restrictions on additional time in the Upper Subdistrict were put in place in 1999. At that time there was a mandatory 24-hour closed period on Fridays, often called a "window". In addition, there was a second 24-hour window if the in-river king salmon sport fishery was restricted. In 1996, a limit on additional fishing time of no more than a single extra period per week was put in place in the Kalgin Island Subdistrict in the Packers Creek Sockeye Salmon Management Plan. Also in 1996, restrictions were implemented in the Northern District set gillnet fishery; additional time, other than regular periods, was prohibited after August 15, and two regular periods were restricted to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections for the drift fishery in the Northern District Salmon Management Plan. A third regular drift gillnet period after July 25 was restricted in 1999 to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections. In 2002, additional fishing time in the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery was limited to either 36, 48 or 60 hours of additional time per week and a mandatory closed period of 24, 36 or 48 hours depending on run strength was implemented. For runs of less than 2 million the number of additional hours is restricted to no more than 24 hours of additional fishing time per week. For runs between 2 and 4 million there is a limit on additional time of no more than 36 hours per week and there is a mandatory closed period of 48 hours per week. For runs of over 4 million there is a limit on additional time of no more than 60 hours per week and a mandatory closed period of 36 hours per week. Substantial changes (outlined above) were again adopted at the 2005 Board of Fisheries meeting.

Since 1999 the Kenai River in-river run goal has been exceeded 5 of 9 years and within the goal four times. During that same time period, the Kenai River was below the optimum escapement goal (OEG) twice, within the OEG four times, and was exceeded three times. From 2001 to 2006, the SEG has been below once, within once, and exceeded in the past four years.

Kenai River late run sockeye salmon sport fish harvests from 1985-2006 have ranged from 57,213 to 294,287 fish, with a 10-year average (1997-2006) of 224,758 fish. The harvest above the sonar site hasn't been below 100,000 fish since 1986. Sockeye salmon harvest from 2004 to 2006 averaged 228,652 fish for the Kenai River personal use dip net fishery. Effort and harvest in the 2006 Kenai River inriver fisheries was atypical due to a later than expected late return of sockeye salmon to the Kenai River. This resulted in closure and subsequent late season liberalization of the dip net fishery.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. However, the department does support the development of flexible management plans.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 189: 5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai Peninsula Fishermen's Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would make substantial changes to the current management plan. It would remove windows and fishing hours within the plan, replace the optimum escapement goal with the sustainable escapement goal, delete the different tiers based on run strength, lower the minimum inriver goal, and require the in-river sport and personal use fisheries to be subject to the requirement of achieving the lower end of the in-river goal.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon stocks are managed primarily for commercial uses. The department shall also manage the commercial fisheries to minimize the harvest of Northern District and Kenai River coho and late-run Kenai River king salmon stocks to provide personal use, sport, and guided sport fishermen with an opportunity to harvest these resources. The Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon fisheries shall be managed to meet an optimum escapement goal range of 500,000 - 1,000,000 late-run sockeye salmon, achieve inriver goals, and to distribute the escapement of sockeye salmon throughout the OEG range. The current sustainable escapement goal is 500,000 to 800,000 sockeye salmon and is determined by the department.

Based on preseason forecasts and inseason projections of the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon return, the run will be managed as follows: At run strengths of less than 2,000,000 sockeye salmon, the department shall manage for an inriver goal range of 650,000-850,000 sockeye salmon past the sonar counter at river mile 19 and will fish regular weekly fishing periods and allow additional fishing of no more than 24-hours per week.

At run strengths of 2,000,000 to 4,000,000, the department shall manage for an inriver goal range of 750,000-950,000 sockeye salmon past the sonar counter and allow additional fishing of no more than 51-hours per week. The set gillnet fishery will be closed for one 36-hour period per week beginning between 7:00 p.m. Thursday and 7:00 a.m. Friday and for an additional 24-hour period during the same week.

At run strengths greater than 4,000,000, the department shall manage for an inriver goal range of 850,000-1,100,000 sockeye salmon past the sonar counter and allow additional

fishing of no more than 84-hours per week. The set gillnet fishery will be closed for one 36-hour period per week, beginning between 7:00 p.m. Thursday and 7:00 a.m. Friday.

Subject to the requirement of achieving the lower end of the optimal escapement goal, the department shall manage the sport fishery on the Kenai River, except that portion of the Kenai River from its confluence with the Russian River to an ADF&G regulatory marker located 1,800 yards downstream as follows; fishing will occur seven days per week, 24 hours per day; and the bag and possession limit for the sport fishery is three sockeye salmon unless the department determines that the abundance of late-run sockeye exceeds 2,000,000 salmon, at which time the commissioner may, by emergency order, increase the bag and possession limit to six sockeye salmon.

Subject to the requirement of achieving the lower end of the optimal escapement goal, the department shall provide for a personal use dip net fishery in the lower Kenai River In the personal use fishery salmon may be taken by dip net in the Kenai River as follows: from July 10 through July 31, seven days per week, from 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.; the commissioner may extend, by emergency order, the personal use fishery to 24-hours per day if the department determines that the abundance of the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon is greater than 2 million fish; the annual limit for each personnel use salmon fishing permit is 25 salmon for the head of a household and 10 salmon for each dependent of the permit holder.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal is fairly broad in its scope and seeks to remove all restrictions to fishing time and mandatory closed windows. In years of abundant sockeye salmon returns there would be additional fishing in the drift fishery and the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery to manage for escapement goals. Many of these management actions would likely occur when sockeye salmon are concentrated along the east-side beaches. It is likely there would be changes to harvest patterns, which would increase sockeye harvests to achieve the escapement goal.

Changing the trigger point for liberalizing the sport fishery to a projection that the upper end of the escapement goal will be exceeded will result in fewer occasions that the sport fishery would be liberalized. A reduction in the inriver goal of 50,000 sockeye salmon may lead to an increased occurrence of sport fish restrictions or closures above the sonar site.

If these regulations were amended in this fashion, the department would manage for the various escapement goals as established in the various management plans without any direction from the board on specific management measures intended to allocate the harvest among the various users. The board and public need to understand this approach results in user group allocations becoming incidental to management directed at achieving a certain level of escapement in each system with a goal.

BACKGROUND: The first restrictions on additional time in the Upper Subdistrict were put in place in 1999. At that time there was a mandatory 24-hour closed period on

Fridays, often called a "window". In addition, there was a second 24-hour window if the in-river king salmon sport fishery was restricted. In 1996, a limit on additional fishing time of no more than a single extra period per week was put in place in the Kalgin Island Subdistrict in the Packers Creek Sockeye Salmon Management Plan. Also in 1996, restrictions were implemented in the Northern District set gillnet fishery; additional time, other than regular periods, was prohibited after August 15, and two regular periods were restricted to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections for the drift fishery in the Northern District Salmon Management Plan. A third regular drift gillnet period after July 25 was restricted in 1999 to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections. In 2002, additional fishing time in the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery was limited to either 36, 48 or 60 hours of additional time per week and a mandatory closed period of 24, 36 or 48 hours depending on run strength was implemented. For runs of less than 2 million the number of additional hours is restricted to no more than 24 hours of additional fishing time per week. For runs between 2 and 4 million there is a limit on additional time of no more than 36 hours per week and there is a mandatory closed period of 48 hours per week. For runs of over 4 million there is a limit on additional time of no more than 60 hours per week and a mandatory closed period of 36 hours per week. Substantial changes (outlined above) were again adopted at the 2005 Board of Fisheries meeting.

Since 1999 the Kenai River in-river run goal has been exceeded 5 of 9 years and within the goal four times. During that same time period, the Kenai River was below the optimum escapement goal (OEG) twice, within the OEG four times, and was exceeded three times. From 2001 to 2006, the SEG has been below once, within once, and exceeded in the past four years.

Kenai River late run sockeye salmon sport fish harvests from 1985-2006 have ranged from 57,213 to 294,287 fish, with a 10-year average (1997-2006) of 224,758 fish. The harvest above the sonar site hasn't been below 100,000 fish since 1986. Sockeye salmon harvest from 2004 to 2006 averaged 228,652 fish for the Kenai River personal use dip net fishery. Effort and harvest in the 2006 Kenai River inriver fisheries was atypical due to a later than expected late return of sockeye salmon to the Kenai River. This resulted in closure and subsequent late season liberalization of the dip net fishery.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. However, the department does support the development of flexible management plans.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 190: 5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Gary Hollier

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would make substantial changes to the current management plan. It would remove windows and fishing hours within the plan, replace the optimum escapement goal with the sustainable escapement goal, delete the different tiers based on run strength, lower the minimum inriver goal, and require the in-river sport and personal use fisheries to be subject to the requirement of achieving the lower end of the in-river goal.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon stocks are managed primarily for commercial uses. The department shall also manage the commercial fisheries to minimize the harvest of Northern District and Kenai River coho and late-run Kenai River king salmon stocks to provide personal use, sport, and guided sport fishermen with an opportunity to harvest these resources. The Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon fisheries shall be managed to meet an optimum escapement goal range of 500,000 - 1,000,000 late-run sockeye salmon, achieve inriver goals, and to distribute the escapement of sockeye salmon throughout the OEG range. The current sustainable escapement goal is 500,000 to 800,000 sockeye salmon and is determined by the department.

Based on preseason forecasts and inseason projections of the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon return, the run will be managed as follows: At run strengths of less than 2,000,000 sockeye salmon, the department shall manage for an inriver goal range of 650,000-850,000 sockeye salmon past the sonar counter at river mile 19 and will fish regular weekly fishing periods and allow additional fishing of no more than 24-hours per week.

At run strengths of 2,000,000 to 4,000,000, the department shall manage for an inriver goal range of 750,000-950,000 sockeye salmon past the sonar counter and allow additional fishing of no more than 51-hours per week. The set gillnet fishery will be closed for one 36-hour period per week beginning between 7:00 p.m. Thursday and 7:00 a.m. Friday and for an additional 24-hour period during the same week.

At run strengths greater than 4,000,000, the department shall manage for an inriver goal range of 850,000-1,100,000 sockeye salmon past the sonar counter and allow additional fishing of no more than 84-hours per week. The set gillnet fishery will be closed for one 36-hour period per week, beginning between 7:00 p.m. Thursday and 7:00 a.m. Friday.

Subject to the requirement of achieving the lower end of the optimal escapement goal, the department shall manage the sport fishery on the Kenai River, except that portion of the Kenai River from its confluence with the Russian River to an ADF&G regulatory marker located 1,800 yards downstream as follows; fishing will occur seven days per week, 24 hours per day; and the bag and possession limit for the sport fishery is three sockeye salmon unless the department determines that the abundance of late-run sockeye exceeds 2,000,000 salmon, at which time the commissioner may, by emergency order, increase the bag and possession limit to six sockeye salmon.

Subject to the requirement of achieving the lower end of the optimal escapement goal, the department shall provide for a personal use dip net fishery in the lower Kenai River In the personal use fishery salmon may be taken by dip net in the Kenai River as follows: from July 10 through July 31, seven days per week, from 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.; the commissioner may extend, by emergency order, the personal use fishery to 24-hours per day if the department determines that the abundance of the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon is greater than 2 million fish; the annual limit for each personnel use salmon fishing permit is 25 salmon for the head of a household and 10 salmon for each dependent of the permit holder.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal is fairly broad in its scope and seeks to remove all restrictions to fishing time and mandatory closed windows. In years of abundant sockeye salmon returns there would be additional fishing in the drift fishery and the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery to manage for escapement goals. Many of these management actions would likely occur when sockeye salmon are concentrated along the east-side beaches. It is likely there would be changes to harvest patterns, which would increase sockeye harvests to achieve the escapement goal.

Changing the trigger point for liberalizing the sport fishery to a projection that the upper end of the escapement goal will be exceeded will result in fewer occasions that the sport fishery would be liberalized. A reduction in the inriver goal of 50,000 sockeye salmon may lead to an increased occurrence of sport fish restrictions or closures above the sonar site.

If these regulations were amended in this fashion the department would manage for the various escapement goals as established in the various management plans without any direction from the board on specific management measures intended to allocate the harvest among the various users. The board and public need to understand this approach results in user group allocations becoming incidental to management directed at achieving a certain level of escapement in each system with a goal.

BACKGROUND: The first restrictions on additional time in the Upper Subdistrict were put in place in 1999. At that time there was a mandatory 24-hour closed period on Fridays, often called a “window”. In addition, there was a second 24-hour window if the in-river king salmon fishery was restricted. In 1996, a limit on additional fishing time of no more than a single extra period per week was put in place in the Kalgin Island Subdistrict in the Packers Creek Sockeye Salmon Management Plan. Also in 1996, restrictions were implemented in the Northern District set gillnet fishery; additional time, other than regular periods, was prohibited after August 15, and two regular periods were restricted to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections for the drift fishery in the Northern District Salmon Management Plan. A third regular drift gillnet period after July 25 was restricted in 1999 to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections. In 2002, additional fishing time in the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery was limited to either 36, 48 or 60 hours of additional time per week and a mandatory closed period of 24, 36 or 48 hours depending on run strength was implemented. For runs of less than 2 million the number of additional hours is

restricted to no more than 24 hours of additional fishing time per week. For runs between 2 and 4 million there is a limit on additional time of no more than 36 hours per week and there is a mandatory closed period of 48 hours per week. For runs of over 4 million there is a limit on additional time of no more than 60 hours per week and a mandatory closed period of 36 hours per week. Substantial changes (outlined above) were again adopted at the 2005 Board of Fisheries meeting.

Since 1999 the Kenai River in-river run goal has been exceeded 5 of 9 years and within the goal four times. During that same time period, the Kenai River was below the optimum escapement goal (OEG) twice, within the OEG four times, and was exceeded three times.

A biological escapement goal (BEG) of 500,000-800,000 spawners for Kenai River sockeye salmon was adopted by the department in 1999. The goal was met or exceeded three of the past four years. In 2005 the department's escapement goal review committee recommended no change to the escapement goal range of 500,000-800,000 fish; however, the committee recommended changing the goal type from a BEG to a SEG.

Kenai River late run sockeye salmon sport fish harvests from 1985-2006 have ranged from 57,213 to 294,287 fish, with a 10-year average (1997-2006) of 224,758 fish. The harvest above the sonar site hasn't been below 100,000 fish since 1986. Sockeye salmon harvest from 2004 to 2006 averaged 228,652 fish for the Kenai River personal use dip net fishery. Effort and harvest in the 2006 Kenai River inriver fisheries was atypical due to a later than expected late return of sockeye salmon to the Kenai River. This resulted in closure and subsequent late season liberalization of the dip net fishery.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. However, the department does support the development of flexible management plans.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 191: 5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: John Higgins

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would make substantial changes to the current management plan. It would remove windows and fishing hours within the plan, replace the optimum escapement goal with the sustainable escapement goal, delete the different tiers based on run strength, lower the minimum inriver goal, and require the in-river sport and personal use fisheries to be subject to the requirement of achieving the lower end of the in-river goal.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon stocks are managed primarily for commercial uses. The department shall also manage the commercial fisheries to minimize the harvest of Northern District and Kenai River coho and late-run Kenai River king salmon stocks to provide personal use, sport, and guided sport fishermen with an opportunity to harvest these resources. The Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon fisheries shall be managed to meet an optimum escapement goal range of 500,000 - 1,000,000 late-run sockeye salmon, achieve inriver goals, and to distribute the escapement of sockeye salmon throughout the OEG range. The current sustainable escapement goal is 500,000 to 800,000 sockeye salmon and is determined by the department.

Based on preseason forecasts and inseason projections of the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon return, the run will be managed as follows: At run strengths of less than 2,000,000 sockeye salmon, the department shall manage for an inriver goal range of 650,000-850,000 sockeye salmon past the sonar counter at river mile 19 and will fish regular weekly fishing periods and allow additional fishing of no more than 24-hours per week.

At run strengths of 2,000,000 to 4,000,000, the department shall manage for an inriver goal range of 750,000-950,000 sockeye salmon past the sonar counter and allow additional fishing of no more than 51-hours per week. The set gillnet fishery will be closed for one 36-hour period per week beginning between 7:00 p.m. Thursday and 7:00 a.m. Friday and for an additional 24-hour period during the same week.

At run strengths greater than 4,000,000, the department shall manage for an inriver goal range of 850,000-1,100,000 sockeye salmon past the sonar counter and allow additional fishing of no more than 84-hours per week. The set gillnet fishery will be closed for one 36-hour period per week, beginning between 7:00 p.m. Thursday and 7:00 a.m. Friday.

Subject to the requirement of achieving the lower end of the optimal escapement goal, the department shall manage the sport fishery on the Kenai River, except that portion of the Kenai River from its confluence with the Russian River to an ADF&G regulatory marker located 1,800 yards downstream as follows; fishing will occur seven days per week, 24 hours per day; and the bag and possession limit for the sport fishery is three sockeye salmon unless the department determines that the abundance of late-run sockeye exceeds 2,000,000 salmon, at which time the commissioner may, by emergency order, increase the bag and possession limit to six sockeye salmon.

Subject to the requirement of achieving the lower end of the optimal escapement goal, the department shall provide for a personal use dip net fishery in the lower Kenai River In the personal use fishery salmon may be taken by dip net in the Kenai River as follows: from July 10 through July 31, seven days per week, from 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.; the commissioner may extend, by emergency order, the personal use fishery to 24-hours per day if the department determines that the abundance of the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon is greater than 2 million fish; the annual limit for each personnel use salmon

fishing permit is 25 salmon for the head of a household and 10 salmon for each dependent of the permit holder.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal is fairly broad in its scope and seeks to remove all restrictions to emergency order authority and mandatory closed periods. If this proposal were adopted as written, the various restrictions to the department's emergency order authority would be deleted from regulation. In years of abundant sockeye salmon returns there would be additional fishing in the drift fishery and the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery to manage for escapement goals. Many of these management actions would likely occur when sockeye are concentrated along the east-side beaches. It is likely there would be changes to harvest patterns, which would increase sockeye harvests to achieve the escapement goal.

Changing the trigger point for liberalizing the sport fishery to a projection that the upper end of the escapement goal will be exceeded will result in fewer occasions that the sport fishery would be liberalized. A reduction in the inriver goal of 50,000 sockeye salmon may lead to an increased occurrence of sport fish restrictions or closures above the sonar site.

If these regulations were amended in this fashion the department would manage for the various escapement goals as established in the various management plans without any direction from the board on specific management measures intended to allocate the harvest among the various users. The board and public need to understand this approach results in user group allocations becoming incidental to management directed at achieving a certain level of escapement in each system with a goal.

BACKGROUND: The first restrictions on additional time in the Upper Subdistrict were put in place in 1999. At that time there was a mandatory 24-hour closed period on Fridays, often called a "window". In addition, there was a second 24-hour window if the in-river king salmon fishery was restricted. In 1996, a limit on additional fishing time of no more than a single extra period per week was put in place in the Kalgin Island Subdistrict in the Packers Creek Sockeye Salmon Management Plan. Also in 1996, restrictions were implemented in the Northern District set gillnet fishery; additional time, other than regular periods, was prohibited after August 15, and two regular periods were restricted to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections for the drift fishery in the Northern District Salmon Management Plan. A third regular drift gillnet period after July 25 was restricted in 1999 to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections. In 2002, additional fishing time in the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery was limited to either 36, 48 or 60 hours of additional time per week and a mandatory closed period of 24, 36 or 48 hours depending on run strength was implemented. For runs of less than 2 million the number of additional hours is restricted to no more than 24 hours of additional fishing time per week. For runs between 2 and 4 million there is a limit on additional time of no more than 36 hours per week and there is a mandatory closed period of 48 hours per week. For runs of over 4 million there is a limit on additional time of no more than 60 hours per week and a mandatory closed period of 36 hours per week. Substantial changes (outlined above) were again adopted at the 2005 Board of Fisheries meeting.

Since 1999 the Kenai River in-river run goal has been exceeded 5 of 9 years and within the goal four times. During that same time period, the Kenai River was below the optimum escapement goal (OEG) twice, within the OEG four times, and was exceeded three times.

A biological escapement goal (BEG) of 500,000-800,000 spawners for Kenai River sockeye salmon was adopted by the department in 1999. The goal was met or exceeded three of the past four years. In 2005 the department's escapement goal review committee recommended no change to the escapement goal range of 500,000-800,000 fish; however, the committee recommended changing the goal type from a BEG to a SEG.

Kenai River late run sockeye salmon sport fish harvests from 1985-2006 have ranged from 57,213 to 294,287 fish, with a 10-year average (1997-2006) of 224,758 fish. The harvest above the sonar site hasn't been below 100,000 fish since 1986. Sockeye salmon harvest from 2004 to 2006 averaged 228,652 fish for the Kenai River personal use dip net fishery. Effort and harvest in the 2006 Kenai River inriver fisheries was atypical due to a later than expected late return of sockeye salmon to the Kenai River. This resulted in closure and subsequent late season liberalization of the dip net fishery.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. However, the department does support the development of flexible management plans.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 192: 5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: John Higgins

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would make substantial changes to the current management plan. It would remove windows and fishing hours within the plan, replace the optimum escapement goal with the sustainable escapement goal, delete the different tiers based on run strength, lower the minimum inriver goal, and require the in-river sport and personal use fisheries to be subject to the requirement of achieving the lower end of the in-river goal.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon stocks are managed primarily for commercial uses. The department shall also manage the commercial fisheries to minimize the harvest of Northern District and Kenai River coho and late-run Kenai River king salmon stocks to provide personal use, sport, and guided sport fishermen with an opportunity to harvest these resources. The Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon fisheries shall be managed to meet an optimum

escapement goal range of 500,000 - 1,000,000 late-run sockeye salmon, achieve inriver goals, and to distribute the escapement of sockeye salmon throughout the OEG range. The current sustainable escapement goal is 500,000 to 800,000 sockeye salmon and is determined by the department.

Based on preseason forecasts and inseason projections of the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon return, the run will be managed as follows: At run strengths of less than 2,000,000 sockeye salmon, the department shall manage for an inriver goal range of 650,000-850,000 sockeye salmon past the sonar counter at river mile 19 and will fish regular weekly fishing periods and allow additional fishing of no more than 24-hours per week.

At run strengths of 2,000,000 to 4,000,000, the department shall manage for an inriver goal range of 750,000-950,000 sockeye salmon past the sonar counter and allow additional fishing of no more than 51-hours per week. The set gillnet fishery will be closed for one 36-hour period per week beginning between 7:00 p.m. Thursday and 7:00 a.m. Friday and for an additional 24-hour period during the same week.

At run strengths greater than 4,000,000, the department shall manage for an inriver goal range of 850,000-1,100,000 sockeye salmon past the sonar counter and allow additional fishing of no more than 84-hours per week. The set gillnet fishery will be closed for one 36-hour period per week, beginning between 7:00 p.m. Thursday and 7:00 a.m. Friday.

Subject to the requirement of achieving the lower end of the optimal escapement goal, the department shall manage the sport fishery on the Kenai River, except that portion of the Kenai River from its confluence with the Russian River to an ADF&G regulatory marker located 1,800 yards downstream as follows; fishing will occur seven days per week, 24 hours per day; and the bag and possession limit for the sport fishery is three sockeye salmon unless the department determines that the abundance of late-run sockeye exceeds 2,000,000 salmon, at which time the commissioner may, by emergency order, increase the bag and possession limit to six sockeye salmon.

Subject to the requirement of achieving the lower end of the optimal escapement goal, the department shall provide for a personal use dip net fishery in the lower Kenai River In the personal use fishery salmon may be taken by dip net in the Kenai River as follows: from July 10 through July 31, seven days per week, from 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.; the commissioner may extend, by emergency order, the personal use fishery to 24-hours per day if the department determines that the abundance of the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon is greater than 2 million fish; the annual limit for each personnel use salmon fishing permit is 25 salmon for the head of a household and 10 salmon for each dependent of the permit holder.

<u>WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED?</u> This proposal is fairly broad in its scope and seeks to remove all restrictions to fishing time and mandatory closed periods. In years of abundant sockeye salmon returns there would be additional fishing in the drift fishery and the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery to

manage for escapement goals. Many of these management actions would likely occur when sockeye salmon are concentrated along the east-side beaches. It is likely there would be changes to harvest patterns, which would increase sockeye harvests to achieve the escapement goal. Elimination of an inriver goal may result in restrictions or closures to the inriver sport and personal use fisheries depending on commercial fishing activities. Eliminating the trigger point for liberalizing the sport fishery would prevent the bag and possession limit from increasing regardless of run size.

If these regulations were amended in this fashion, the department would manage for the various escapement goals as established in the various management plans without any direction from the board on specific management measures intended to allocate the harvest among the various users. The board and public need to understand this approach results in user group allocations becoming incidental to management directed at achieving a certain level of escapement in each system with a goal.

BACKGROUND: The first restrictions on additional time in the Upper Subdistrict were put in place in 1999. At that time there was a mandatory 24-hour closed period on Fridays, often called a "window". In addition, there was a second 24-hour window if the in-river king salmon sport fishery was restricted. In 1996, a limit on additional fishing time of no more than a single extra period per week was put in place in the Kalgin Island Subdistrict in the Packers Creek Sockeye Salmon Management Plan. Also in 1996, restrictions were implemented in the Northern District set gillnet fishery; additional time, other than regular periods, was prohibited after August 15, and two regular periods were restricted to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections for the drift fishery in the Northern District Salmon Management Plan. A third regular drift gillnet period after July 25 was restricted in 1999 to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections. In 2002, additional fishing time in the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery was limited to either 36, 48 or 60 hours of additional time per week and a mandatory closed period of 24, 36 or 48 hours depending on run strength was implemented. For runs of less than 2 million the number of additional hours is restricted to no more than 24 hours of additional fishing time per week. For runs between 2 and 4 million there is a limit on additional time of no more than 36 hours per week and there is a mandatory closed period of 48 hours per week. For runs of over 4 million there is a limit on additional time of no more than 60 hours per week and a mandatory closed period of 36 hours per week. Substantial changes (outlined above) were again adopted at the 2005 Board of Fisheries meeting.

Since 1999 the Kenai River in-river run goal has been exceeded 5 of 9 years and within the goal four times. During that same time period, the Kenai River was below the optimum escapement goal (OEG) twice, within the OEG four times, and was exceeded three times. From 2001 to 2006, the SEG has been below once, within once, and exceeded in the past four years.

A biological escapement goal (BEG) of 500,000-800,000 spawners for Kenai River sockeye salmon was adopted by the department in 1999. The goal was met or exceeded three of the past four years. In 2005 the department's escapement goal review committee

recommended no change to the escapement goal range of 500,000-800,000 fish; however, the committee recommended changing the goal type from a BEG to a SEG.

Kenai River late run sockeye salmon sport fish harvests from 1985-2006 have ranged from 57,213 to 294,287 fish, with a 10-year average (1997-2006) of 224,758 fish. The harvest above the sonar site hasn't been below 100,000 fish since 1986. Sockeye salmon harvest from 2004 to 2006 averaged 228,652 fish for the Kenai River personal use dip net fishery. Effort and harvest in the 2006 Kenai River inriver fisheries was atypical due to a later than expected late return of sockeye salmon to the Kenai River. This resulted in closure and subsequent late season liberalization of the dip net fishery.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. However, the department does support the development of flexible management plans.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 195: 5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Wesley J. Humbyrd

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Remove regulatory language which requires closed windows and limitations on the amount of emergency order beyond the two regular 12-hour commercial fishing periods that can be fished. It would also delete the three tiers of regulations related to run size and the in-river goals associated with those tiers.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Based on preseason forecasts and inseason projections of the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon return, the run will be managed as follows: At run strengths of less than 2,000,000 sockeye salmon, the department shall manage for an inriver goal range of 650,000-850,000 sockeye salmon past the sonar counter at river mile 19 and will fish regular weekly fishing periods and allow additional fishing of no more than 24-hours per week.

At run strengths of 2,000,000 to 4,000,000, the department shall manage for an inriver goal range of 750,000-950,000 sockeye salmon past the sonar counter and allow additional fishing of no more than 51-hours per week. The set gillnet fishery will be closed for one 36-hour period per week beginning between 7:00 p.m. Thursday and 7:00 a.m. Friday and for an additional 24-hour period during the same week.

At run strengths greater than 4,000,000, the department shall manage for an inriver goal range of 850,000-1,100,000 sockeye salmon past the sonar counter and allow additional

fishing of no more than 84-hours per week. The set gillnet fishery will be closed for one 36-hour period per week, beginning between 7:00 p.m. Thursday and 7:00 a.m. Friday.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal is fairly broad in its scope and seeks to remove all restrictions to fishing time and mandatory closed periods. It would also delete the three tiers of regulations related to run size. If this proposal were adopted as written, the various restrictions to the department's emergency order authority would be deleted from regulation. In years of abundant sockeye returns, there would be additional fishing in the drift fishery and Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery to manage for escapement goals. Many of these management actions would likely occur when sockeye are concentrated along the east-side beaches. It is likely there would be changes to harvest patterns, which would increase sockeye salmon harvests to achieve the escapement goal. Elimination of an inriver goal may result in restrictions or closures to the inriver sport and personal use fisheries depending on commercial fishing activities.

If these regulations were amended in this fashion the department would manage for the various escapement goals as established in the various management plans without any direction from the board on specific management measures intended to allocate the harvest among the various users. The board and public need to understand this approach results in user group allocations becoming incidental to management directed at achieving a certain level of escapement in each system with a goal.

BACKGROUND: The first restrictions on additional time in the Upper Subdistrict were put in place in 1999. At that time there was a mandatory 24-hour closed period on Fridays, often called a "window". In addition, there was a second 24-hour window if the in-river king salmon sport fishery was restricted. In 1996, a limit on additional fishing time of no more than a single extra period per week was put in place in the Kalgin Island Subdistrict in the Packers Creek Sockeye Salmon Management Plan. Also in 1996, restrictions were implemented in the Northern District set gillnet fishery; additional time, other than regular periods, was prohibited after August 15, and two regular periods were restricted to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections for the drift fishery in the Northern District Salmon Management Plan. A third regular drift gillnet period after July 25 was restricted in 1999 to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections. In 2002, additional fishing time in the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery was limited to either 36, 48 or 60 hours of additional time per week and a mandatory closed period of 24, 36 or 48 hours depending on run strength was implemented. For runs of less than 2 million the number of additional hours is restricted to no more than 24 hours of additional fishing time per week. For runs between 2 and 4 million there is a limit on additional time of no more than 36 hours per week and there is a mandatory closed period of 48 hours per week. For runs of over 4 million there is a limit on additional time of no more than 60 hours per week and a mandatory closed period of 36 hours per week. Substantial changes (outlined above) were again adopted at the 2005 Board of Fisheries meeting.

Since 1999 the Kenai River in-river run goal has been exceeded 5 of 9 years and within the goal four times. During that same time period, the Kenai River was below the

optimum escapement goal (OEG) twice, within the OEG four times, and was exceeded three times. From 2001 to 2006, the SEG has been below once, within once, and exceeded in the past four years.

A biological escapement goal (BEG) of 500,000-800,000 spawners for Kenai River sockeye salmon was adopted by the department in 1999. The goal was met or exceeded three of the past four years. In 2005 the department's escapement goal review committee recommended no change to the escapement goal range of 500,000-800,000 fish; however, the committee recommended changing the goal type from a BEG to a SEG.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. However, the department does support the development of flexible management plans.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 200: 5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Remove regulatory language which requires closed windows and limitations on the amount of emergency order beyond the two regular 12-hour commercial fishing periods that can be fished. It would also delete the three tiers of regulations related to run size and the in-river goals associated with those tiers.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Based on preseason forecasts and inseason projections of the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon return, the run will be managed as follows: At run strengths of less than 2,000,000 sockeye salmon, the department shall manage for an inriver goal range of 650,000-850,000 sockeye salmon past the sonar counter at river mile 19 and will fish regular weekly fishing periods and allow additional fishing of no more than 24-hours per week.

At run strengths of 2,000,000 to 4,000,000, the department shall manage for an inriver goal range of 750,000-950,000 sockeye salmon past the sonar counter and allow additional fishing of no more than 51-hours per week. The set gillnet fishery will be closed for one 36-hour period per week beginning between 7:00 p.m. Thursday and 7:00 a.m. Friday and for an additional 24-hour period during the same week.

At run strengths greater than 4,000,000, the department shall manage for an inriver goal range of 850,000-1,100,000 sockeye salmon past the sonar counter and allow additional fishing of no more than 84-hours per week. The set gillnet fishery will be closed for one 36-hour period per week, beginning between 7:00 p.m. Thursday and 7:00 a.m. Friday.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal is fairly broad in its scope and seeks to remove all restrictions to fishing time and mandatory closed periods. It would also delete the three tiers of regulations related to run size. If this proposal were adopted as written, the various restrictions to the department's emergency order authority would be deleted from regulation. In years of abundant sockeye returns, there would be additional fishing in the drift fishery and Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery to manage for escapement goals. Many of these management actions would likely occur when sockeye are concentrated along the east-side beaches. It is likely there would be changes to harvest patterns, which would increase sockeye salmon harvests to achieve the escapement goal. Elimination of an inriver goal may result in restrictions or closures to the inriver sport and personal use fisheries depending on commercial fishing activities.

If these regulations were amended in this fashion the department would manage for the various escapement goals as established in the various management plans without any direction from the board on specific management measures intended to allocate the harvest among the various users. The board and public need to understand this approach results in user group allocations becoming incidental to management directed at achieving a certain level of escapement in each system with a goal.

BACKGROUND: The first restrictions on additional time in the Upper Subdistrict were put in place in 1999. At that time there was a mandatory 24-hour closed period on Fridays, often called a "window". In addition, there was a second 24-hour window if the in-river king salmon sport fishery was restricted. In 1996, a limit on additional fishing time of no more than a single extra period per week was put in place in the Kalgin Island Subdistrict in the Packers Creek Sockeye Salmon Management Plan. Also in 1996, restrictions were implemented in the Northern District set gillnet fishery; additional time, other than regular periods, was prohibited after August 15, and two regular periods were restricted to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections for the drift fishery in the Northern District Salmon Management Plan. A third regular drift gillnet period after July 25 was restricted in 1999 to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections. In 2002, additional fishing time in the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery was limited to either 36, 48 or 60 hours of additional time per week and a mandatory closed period of 24, 36 or 48 hours depending on run strength was implemented. For runs of less than 2 million the number of additional hours is restricted to no more than 24 hours of additional fishing time per week. For runs between 2 and 4 million there is a limit on additional time of no more than 36 hours per week and there is a mandatory closed period of 48 hours per week. For runs of over 4 million there is a limit on additional time of no more than 60 hours per week and a mandatory closed period of 36 hours per week. Substantial changes (outlined above) were again adopted at the 2005 Board of Fisheries meeting.

Since 1999 the Kenai River in-river run goal has been exceeded 5 of 9 years and within the goal four times. During that same time period, the Kenai River was below the optimum escapement goal (OEG) twice, within the OEG four times, and was exceeded three times. From 2001 to 2006, the SEG has been below once, within once, and exceeded in the past four years.

A biological escapement goal (BEG) of 500,000-800,000 spawners for Kenai River sockeye salmon was adopted by the department in 1999. The goal was met or exceeded three of the past four years. In 2005 the department's escapement goal review committee recommended no change to the escapement goal range of 500,000-800,000 fish; however, the committee recommended changing the goal type from a BEG to a SEG.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. However, the department does support the development of flexible management plans.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 202: 5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai River Sportfishing Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would increase the duration and number of closed windows currently in regulation for runs less than 4,000,000 sockeye salmon returning to the Kenai River. This proposal would prescribe when windows would occur, namely a 48 hour window on Thursday into Friday and a 36 hour window between Monday and Thursday. In runs of between 2,000,000 and 4,000,000 there would be two mandated windows of 36 hours each.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon stocks are managed primarily for commercial uses. The department shall also manage the commercial fisheries to minimize the harvest of Northern District and Kenai River coho and late-run Kenai River king salmon stocks to provide personal use, sport, and guided sport fishermen with an opportunity to harvest these resources. The Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon fisheries shall be managed to meet an optimum escapement goal range of 500,000 - 1,000,000 late-run sockeye salmon, achieve inriver goals, and to distribute the escapement of sockeye salmon throughout the OEG range.

Based on preseason forecasts and inseason projections of the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon return, the run will be managed as follows: At run strengths of less than 2,000,000 sockeye salmon, the department shall manage for an inriver goal range of 650,000-850,000 sockeye salmon past the sonar counter at river mile 19 and will fish regular weekly fishing periods and allow additional fishing of no more than 24-hours per week.

At run strengths of 2,000,000 to 4,000,000, the department shall manage for an inriver goal range of 750,000-950,000 sockeye salmon past the sonar counter and allow additional fishing of no more than 51-hours per week. The set gillnet fishery will be

closed for one 36-hour period per week beginning between 7:00 p.m. Thursday and 7:00 a.m. Friday and for an additional 24-hour period during the same week.

At run strengths greater than 4,000,000, the department shall manage for an inriver goal range of 850,000-1,100,000 sockeye salmon past the sonar counter and allow additional fishing of no more than 84-hours per week. The set gillnet fishery will be closed for one 36-hour period per week, beginning between 7:00 p.m. Thursday and 7:00 a.m. Friday.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? There would be a reallocation of sockeye salmon to sport and personal use fishers and a reduction in commercial harvest by an unknown amount. It is likely that the Kenai River sockeye salmon in-river and escapement goals would be frequently exceeded. There are 168 hours in a regulatory week. In runs of less than 2,000,000 sockeye salmon, only 48 hours of commercial fishing may occur. Therefore, there are already 120 hours closed to commercial fishing.

BACKGROUND: The first restrictions on additional time in the Upper Subdistrict were put in place in 1999. At that time there was a mandatory 24-hour closed period on Fridays, often called a "window". In addition, there was a second 24-hour window if the in-river king salmon sport fishery was restricted. In 1996, a limit on additional fishing time of no more than a single extra period per week was put in place in the Kalgin Island Subdistrict in the Packers Creek Sockeye Salmon Management Plan. Also in 1996, restrictions were implemented in the Northern District set gillnet fishery; additional time, other than regular periods, was prohibited after August 15, and two regular periods were restricted to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections for the drift fishery in the Northern District Salmon Management Plan. A third regular drift gillnet period after July 25 was restricted in 1999 to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections. In 2002, additional fishing time in the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery was limited to either 36, 48 or 60 hours of additional time per week and a mandatory closed period of 24, 36 or 48 hours depending on run strength was implemented. For runs of less than 2 million the number of additional hours is restricted to no more than 24 hours of additional fishing time per week. For runs between 2 and 4 million there is a limit on additional time of no more than 36 hours per week and there is a mandatory closed period of 48 hours per week. For runs of over 4 million there is a limit on additional time of no more than 60 hours per week and a mandatory closed period of 36 hours per week. Substantial changes (outlined above) were again adopted at the 2005 Board of Fisheries meeting.

Since 1999 the Kenai River in-river run goal has been exceeded 5 of 9 years and within the goal four times. During that same time period, the Kenai River was below the optimum escapement goal (OEG) twice, within the OEG four times, and was exceeded three times. From 2001 to 2006, the SEG has been below once, within once, and exceeded in the past four years.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on the allocative aspects of this proposal but is **OPPOSED** to this proposal on the biological issues it raises. Such

a regulation change may lead to situations where the escapements far exceed established escapement objectives in many run scenarios.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 194: 5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Wesley J. Humbyrd

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would change the current optimum escapement goal from 500,000 to 1,000,000 sockeye salmon to 400,000 – 700,000 sockeye salmon.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon fisheries shall be managed to meet an optimum escapement goal range of 500,000 - 1,000,000 late-run sockeye salmon, achieve inriver goals, and to distribute the escapement of sockeye salmon throughout the OEG range. The sustainable escapement goal is 500,000 to 800,000 sockeye salmon.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Reducing the optimum escapement goal by 100,000 fish from the lower and upper end of the sustainable escapement goal would allow the department to increase harvest rates by all users groups. In establishing an escapement goal of 400,000 to 700,000, the BOF would be creating an OEG. Estimates of less than 650,000 sockeye salmon past the sonar site would likely result in closure to the sport fishery.

BACKGROUND: The current escapement goal range of 500–800 thousand spawners for the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon stock was adopted by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in 1999. The department is not recommending a change to this goal. Stock-recruit data has been extensively modeled in historic reports and again in the escapement goal report presented at this BOF meeting in an effort to identify an appropriate escapement goal. At the 1999 Board of Fisheries meeting, the board adopted an optimal escapement goal of 500,000 to 1,000,000 sockeye salmon. This goal is achieved by managing for one of three abundance based goals. If this proposal were passed, it is assumed that the inriver harvest above the sonar counter would be added to the 400,000 or 700,000 fish level to account for fish harvested above the sonar counter.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. Under the Policy For Management Of Sustainable Salmon Fisheries, the Board may set an optimal escapement goal different from the SEG set by the department.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 196: 5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Wesley J. Humbyrd

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would change the current escapement goal range to 400,000 – 700,000 sockeye. In order to establish the correct inriver sonar goal the inriver harvest above the sonar counter would be added to these numbers. In practice that would be approximately 550,000 to 850,000 at the river mile 19 sonar counter.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon fisheries shall be managed to meet an optimum escapement goal range of 500,000 - 1,000,000 late-run sockeye salmon, achieve inriver goals, and to distribute the escapement of sockeye salmon throughout the OEG range. The sustainable escapement goal is 500,000 to 800,000 sockeye salmon.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Reducing the escapement goal by 100,000 fish from the lower and upper end of the sustainable escapement goal would allow the department to increase harvest rates by all users groups. In establishing an escapement goal of 400,000 to 700,000 the BOF would be creating an OEG. Estimates of less than 650,000 sockeye salmon past the sonar site would likely result in closure to the sport fishery.

BACKGROUND: The current escapement goal range of 500–800 thousand spawners for the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon stock was adopted by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in 1999. The department is not recommending a change to this goal. Stock-recruit data has been extensively modeled in historic reports and again in the escapement goal report presented at this BOF meeting in an effort to identify an appropriate escapement goal. At the 2005 Board of Fisheries meeting, the board adopted an optimal escapement goal of 500,000 to 1,000,000 sockeye salmon. This goal is achieved by managing for one of three abundance based goals. If this proposal were passed it is assumed that the inriver harvest above the sonar counter would be added to the 400,000 or 700,000 fish level to account for fish harvested above the sonar counter.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. Under the Policy For Management Of Sustainable Salmon Fisheries, the Board may set an optimal escapement goal different from the SEG set by the department.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 197: 5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Wesley J. Humbyrd

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would change the current escapement goal range to 400,000 – 700,000 sockeye. In order to establish the correct inriver sonar goal the inriver harvest above the sonar counter would be added to these numbers. In practice that would be approximately 550,000 to 850,000 at the river mile 19 sonar counter.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon fisheries shall be managed to meet an optimum escapement goal range of 500,000 - 1,000,000 late-run sockeye salmon, achieve inriver goals, and to distribute the escapement of sockeye salmon throughout the OEG range. The sustainable escapement goal is 500,000 to 800,000 sockeye salmon.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Reducing the escapement goal by 100,000 fish from the lower and upper end of the sustainable escapement goal would allow the department to increase harvest rates by all users groups. In establishing an escapement goal of 400,000 to 700,000 the BOF would be creating an OEG. Estimates of less than 650,000 sockeye salmon past the sonar site would likely result in closure to the sport fishery.

BACKGROUND: The current escapement goal range of 500–800 thousand spawners for the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon stock was adopted by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in 1999. The department is not recommending a change to this goal. Stock-recruit data has been extensively modeled in historic reports and again in the escapement goal report presented at this BOF meeting in an effort to identify an appropriate escapement goal. At the 2005 Board of Fisheries meeting, the board adopted an optimal escapement goal of 500,000 to 1,000,000 sockeye salmon. This goal is achieved by managing for one of three abundance based goals. If this proposal were passed it is assumed that the inriver harvest above the sonar counter would be added to the 400,000 or 700,000 fish level to account for fish harvested above the sonar counter.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. Under the Policy For Management Of Sustainable Salmon Fisheries, the Board may set an optimal escapement goal different from the SEG set by the department.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 198: 5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Central Peninsula Advisory Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would change the current optimum escapement goal from 500,000 to 1,000,000 sockeye salmon to an escapement goal of 400,000 – 700,000 sockeye salmon.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon fisheries shall be managed to meet an optimum escapement goal range of 500,000 - 1,000,000 late-run sockeye salmon, achieve inriver goals, and to distribute the escapement of sockeye salmon throughout the OEG range. The sustainable escapement goal is 500,000 to 800,000 sockeye salmon.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Reducing the escapement goal by 100,000 fish from the lower and upper end of the sustainable escapement goal would allow the department to increase harvest rates by all users groups. In establishing an escapement goal of 400,000 to 700,000 the BOF would be creating an OEG. Estimates of less than 650,000 sockeye salmon past the sonar site would likely result in closure to the sport fishery.

BACKGROUND: The current escapement goal range of 500–800 thousand spawners for the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon stock was adopted by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in 1999. The department is not recommending a change to this goal. Stock-recruit data has been extensively modeled in historic reports and again in the escapement goal report presented at this BOF meeting in an effort to identify an appropriate escapement goal. At the 2005 Board of Fisheries meeting, the board adopted an optimal escapement goal of 500,000 to 1,000,000 sockeye salmon. This goal is achieved by managing for one of three abundance based goals. If this proposal were passed it is assumed that the inriver harvest above the sonar counter would be added to the 400,000 or 700,000 fish level to account for fish harvested above the sonar counter.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. Under the Policy For Management Of Sustainable Salmon Fisheries, the Board may set an optimal escapement goal different from the SEG set by the department.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 199: 5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Sara Pellegrom

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would delete the current optimal escapement goal of 500,000 – 1,000,000 sockeye salmon and have the department manage for a single inriver goal range of 600,000 to 900,000 salmon that allows for an inriver harvest of 100,000 to 300,000 fish above the sonar counter to still meet the minimum SEG of 500,000. It would also delete the three tier management regime.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon fisheries shall be managed to meet an optimum escapement goal range of 500,000 - 1,000,000 late-run sockeye salmon, achieve inriver goals, and to distribute the escapement of sockeye salmon throughout the OEG range. The sustainable escapement goal is 500,000 to 800,000 sockeye salmon. There are also three tires of in-river sonar goals the department strives to manage.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? If passed, this proposal would result in a much simplified management plan that removed the tiers of the current management goals. It would reduce the inriver sonar goal at the lower end by 50,000 and at the upper end by 300,000 sockeye salmon and the OEG to SEG at the lower end by 50,000 and at the upper end by 200,000 sockeye salmon, which would allow the department to increase harvest rates by all users groups. Estimates of less than 650,000 sockeye salmon past the sonar site would likely result in closure to the sport fishery.

BACKGROUND: The current escapement goal range of 500–800 thousand spawners for the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon stock was adopted by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in 1999. The department is not recommending a change to this goal. Over the past 39 years, estimated escapements have ranged from about 50,000 to 1.3 million sockeye salmon. Estimates of recruits from these levels of escapement ranged from a low of about 2 recruits per spawner to a high of about 16 recruits per spawner. These stock-recruit data have been extensively modeled in historic reports and again in the escapement goal report presented at this BOF meeting in an effort to identify an appropriate escapement goal. At the 2005 Board of Fisheries meeting, the board adopted an optimal escapement goal of 500,000 to 1,000,000 sockeye salmon. This goal is achieved by managing for one of three abundance based goals.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. Under the Policy For Management Of Sustainable Salmon Fisheries, the Board may set an optimal escapement goal different from the SEG set by the department.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 201: 5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: John McCombs

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would change the current escapement goal range to 450,000 – 750,000 sockeye salmon. In order to establish the correct inriver sonar goal the inriver harvest above the sonar counter would be added to these numbers. In practice that would be approximately 550,000 to 850,000 at the river mile 19 sonar counter.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon fisheries shall be managed to meet an optimum escapement goal range of 500,000 - 1,000,000 late-run sockeye salmon, achieve inriver goals, and to distribute the escapement of sockeye salmon throughout the OEG range. The sustainable escapement goal is 500,000 to 800,000 sockeye salmon.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Reducing the escapement goal by 50,000 fish from the lower and upper end of the sustainable escapement goal would allow the department to increase harvest rates by all users groups. In establishing an escapement goal of 450,000 to 750,000 the BOF would be creating an optimal escapement goal. Estimates of less than 650,000 sockeye salmon past the sonar site would likely result in closure to the sport fishery.

BACKGROUND: The current escapement goal range of 500–800 thousand spawners for the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon stock was adopted by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in 1999. The department is not recommending a change to this goal. Stock-recruit data has been extensively modeled in historic reports and again in the escapement goal report presented at this BOF meeting in an effort to identify an appropriate escapement goal. At the 2005 BOF meeting, the board adopted an optimal escapement goal of 500,000 to 1,000,000 sockeye salmon. This goal is achieved by managing for one of three abundance based goals. If this proposal were passed, it is assumed that the inriver harvest above the sonar counter would be added to the 450,000 or 750,000 fish level to account for fish harvested above the sonar counter.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. Under the Policy For Management Of Sustainable Salmon Fisheries, the Board may set an optimal escapement goal different from the SEG set by the department.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 203: 5 AAC 21.363. Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plan; 21.360. Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Sportfishing Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow only one commercial fishing period per week prior to July 20 or when the department re-analyzes

the preseason projection around July 22. After July 20, additional fishing periods would be based upon inseason abundance information supplied by the Kenai River sonar project.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Fishing time is based on preseason forecasts and inseason projections of the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon return. There are two regular periods per week. Additional fishing time is allowed and the amount of fishing time allowed is dependent on the forecasts and run strength. Close fishing windows are also mandated under all tiers. The length and number of windows is also determined by the forecasts and inseason run strengths. In the drift gillnet fishery, two, weekly 12-hour fishing periods per week are scheduled, with the fishing season opening the third Monday in June or June 19, whichever is later. From July 9 through July 31, the drift gillnet fishery utilized a variety of described fishing areas. Available fishing area is determined by the run strength.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Reducing the amount of available fishing time to only one period per week would lead to escapements above sustainable and biological escapement goals. In all likelihood, exceeding the goals would lead to reduced future production. Although inriver harvests would increase for a few years, reduced future production would likely lead to reduced fishing opportunities for all users in the future.

BACKGROUND: The set gillnet fishery in the Kenai and East Foreland section begins July 8 based upon the preseason projection of sockeye salmon returning to the Kenai River. The department then reevaluates the Kenai River sockeye salmon run strength using information from an off shore test fishery, Kenai River sonar counts from the project at mile 19, and drift test fish catches. Typically, this projection occurs the fourth Tuesday or Wednesday after the Monday drift period. Management strategies are then adjusted to the new inseason run projection.

Since 1999 the Kenai River late run sockeye salmon in-river run goal has been exceeded 5 of 9 years and within the goal four times. During that same time period, the Kenai River was below the optimum escapement goal (OEG) twice, within the OEG four times, and was exceeded three times. The Kasilof River biological escapement goal has been exceeded 8 of 9 years. Since 2001, when the current OEG of 150,000 to 300,000 sockeye salmon was established, the OEG has been exceeded 6 of 7 years.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **OPPOSED** to this proposal. Such a regulation change would lead to situations where the escapements far exceed established escapement objectives in many run scenarios.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 205: 5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Monte Roberts

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? There is no proposed regulatory language therefore it is unknown what this proposal would do. However, this proposal appears to develop a management plan that would change the allocation of sockeye salmon to result in equal harvest shares between commercial and sport users.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The department shall manage the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon stocks primarily for commercial uses based on abundance. The department shall also manage the commercial fisheries to minimize the harvest of Northern District coho, late-run Kenai River king, and Kenai River coho salmon stocks to provide personal use, sport, and guided sport fishermen with a reasonable opportunity to harvest salmon resources.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? It would be dependent on actions taken by the BOF. However, it would be expected that there would be a reduction in commercial fisheries harvests and an increase in harvests by all other users.

BACKGROUND: There are numerous regulations and management plans that establish the current allocation scheme.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 209: AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Mary Holler

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would open the Kenai River Special Harvest Area once the lower end of the in-river goal has been achieved.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Currently there is a Kenai River Special Harvest Area that cannot be used unless an inriver return of 40,000 king salmon is projected. At run strengths of less than 2,000,000 sockeye salmon, the inriver goal is 650,000-850,000 sockeye salmon past the sonar counter at river mile 19. At run strengths of 2,000,000 to 4,000,000, the in-river goal is 750,000-950,000 sockeye salmon past the

sonar counter and at run strengths greater than 4,000,000, the in-river goal is 850,000-1,100,000 sockeye salmon.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Effects of this proposal would be dependent upon the usage of the Kenai River Special Harvest Area. When the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area is open, numerous issues can, and have, arise such as enforcement, channel blockage, and other social issues that can lead to an unorderly fishery. This proposal would increase the social conflicts between the commercial and personal use fisheries operating in the same location.

BACKGROUND: The closed waters at the mouth of the Kenai River has not been used since 1988. Currently this area can only be used if over 40,000 late-run king salmon are inriver.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **OPPOSED** to this proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 210: 5 AAC 57.150. Russian River Sockeye Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: John McCombs

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allocate one-half of the early run Russian River sockeye salmon to the commercial fleet.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The purpose of this management plan is to ensure an adequate escapement, as determined by the department, of sockeye salmon into the Russian River system and to provide management guidelines to the department to reduce conflicts between various users of this resource. Because early and late Russian River system sockeye salmon are discrete stocks, each with established escapement goals, these stocks shall be managed by the department as a separate entity without regard to Kenai River system sockeye salmon run size.

Concerning commercial regulations, in the set gillnet fishery, the Kenai and East Forelands Sections are open from July 8 through August 10. In the Central District for drift gillnets, commercial fishing season opens the third Monday in June or June 19 whichever is later, until closed by emergency order.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would open a commercial fishery directed on a stock that historically has been allocated to the sport fishery. Sport fish harvest and effort would decrease by an unknown amount. The commercial harvest of Kenai River early-run king salmon would likely increase and potentially cause inriver sport fishery closures or restrictions.

BACKGROUND: The bulk of the early Kenai River sockeye salmon run (those salmon passing the department sonar counter located near Soldotna before June 21) is comprised of Russian River sockeye salmon stocks. Early Russian River sockeye salmon stocks have been harvested primarily by the sport fishery since 1974. The escapement goal for early Russian River sockeye salmon is 14,000-37,000 sockeye salmon.

The return of early-run sockeye salmon to the Kenai River is not counted by sonar because most enter the river prior to installation of the sockeye salmon sonar at Kenai River mile 19 on July 1. In mid-May an inriver king salmon gillnetting program at Kenai River mile 8.5 begins. Generally the early-run sockeye salmon immigration is detected by this program during late-May. The catch of sockeye in the netting program increases through early June then declines until sometime during July, thereafter the sockeye salmon catch increases as the return of late-run sockeye salmon to the Kenai River commences. Total returns of early-run Russian River sockeye salmon is determined from harvests estimated by creel surveys as well as the SWHS and weir counts. From 1965 – 2006 the total return has averaged approximately 60,484 sockeye salmon. The escapement was 27,298 sockeye salmon in 2007. Historically total return abundance has been variable and in some years quite low (< 20,000 fish). The relative abundance of the stock is very small and therefore susceptible to overexploitation when compared to the abundance other sockeye salmon stocks that support both recreational and commercial harvests.

The Kenai River early-run king salmon fishery is a very intensively managed recreational fishery. Management plans have been conservatively structured to constrain the ability of the angling public to harvest early-run stocks at sustainable levels while still providing for fishing opportunity. Nonetheless, past seasons have established exploitation rates exceeding 60%. During the past 19 years, with the sport fishery managed within the framework of a board adopted management plan, it has been necessary to utilize in-season restrictions during 7 of those years in order to ensure that the final spawning escapement goals were achieved.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **OPPOSED** to the biological aspects of this proposal because of its potential to overexploit the Russian River early-run sockeye salmon stock and the Kenai River early-run king salmon stock. The department is **NEUTRAL** on the allocative aspects of this proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 206 - 5 AAC 21.360(h). Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow the department to reduce the sockeye salmon bag limit in the Kenai River sport fishery rather than close the Kenai River to fishing when the projected inriver goal of sockeye salmon is less than 650,000.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Subject to the requirement of achieving the lower end of the optimal escapement goal, the department shall manage the sport fishery on the Kenai River, except that portion of the Kenai River from its confluence with the Russian River to an ADF&G regulatory marker located 1,800 yards downstream as follows; fishing will occur seven days per week, 24 hours per day; and the bag and possession limit for the sport fishery is three sockeye salmon unless the department determines that the abundance of late-run sockeye exceeds 2,000,000 salmon, at which time the commissioner may, by emergency order, increase the bag and possession limit to six sockeye salmon.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would allow for some inriver harvest opportunity of sockeye salmon while still achieving the lower end of the optimal escapement goal. It would slow the sport fishery down and may allow the fishery to remain open with a restricted bag limit instead of closing it totally. If the optimal escapement goal will not be met, the fishery would still be closed.

BACKGROUND: The Kenai River late-run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan provides direction to the department for liberalizing the inriver sockeye salmon sport fishery based upon the inseason evaluation of sockeye salmon abundance, a commensurate sliding scale of inriver goals, and a bag limit of three to six sockeye salmon. However there are no step-down provisions to allow limited harvest opportunity that would still achieve the OEG of 500,000-1,000,000 fish by reducing the sockeye salmon bag limit before it is closed. At run strengths of less than 2,000,000 sockeye salmon, the Alaska Board of Fisheries established an inriver goal range of 650,000-850,000 late-run sockeye salmon to help ensure that the OEG of 500,000-1,000,000 fish is met after harvest by the sport fishery.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department submitted and **SUPPORTS** this proposal. Adding this provision will allow for a limited fishery in years when the department projects that the in river goal of 650,000-850,000 late-run sockeye salmon will not be met but the optimum escapement goal (OEG) of 500,000-1,000,000 late-run sockeye salmon above the River Mile 19 ADFG sockeye salmon sonar site could be met if the sport fishing sockeye salmon bag and possession limit is lowered below three fish.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 207 - 5 AAC 77.525. Personal use salmon fishery; and 5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Sportfishing Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow the department to increase the sockeye salmon bag and possession limit in the Kenai River recreational fishery to 12 fish and increase the personal use salmon fishing permit limit of 25 salmon for the head of a household to 35 salmon for the head of household, and allow dip netting from a boat from the Kenai City Dock upstream to the Kenai River king salmon sonar station at river mile 8.5 when the abundance of late-run sockeye salmon is projected to exceed 4,000,000 fish.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Subject to the requirement of achieving the lower end of the optimal escapement goal, the department shall manage the sport fishery on the Kenai River, except that portion of the Kenai River from its confluence with the Russian River to an ADF&G regulatory marker located 1,800 yards downstream as follows; fishing will occur seven days per week, 24 hours per day; and the bag and possession limit for the sport fishery is three sockeye salmon unless the department determines that the abundance of late-run sockeye exceeds 2,000,000 salmon, at which time the commissioner may, by emergency order, increase the bag and possession limit to six sockeye salmon.

In the personal use fishery salmon may be taken by dip net in the Kenai River as follows: from July 10 through July 31, seven days per week, from 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.; the commissioner may extend, by emergency order, the personal use fishery to 24-hours per day if the department determines that the abundance of the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon is greater than 2 million fish; the annual limit for each personnel use salmon fishing permit is 25 salmon for the head of a household and 10 salmon for each dependent of the permit holder.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would result in more harvest opportunity for inriver recreational and personal use users during years of large late-run sockeye salmon returns to the Kenai River. Inriver exploitation of sockeye salmon would increase. It could result in conflict between personnel use fishers and inriver sport anglers upstream of the Warren Ames Bridge due to crowding and conflicting gear types. Increased boat traffic may result in more interference with the department's inriver king salmon gillnetting program immediately below the sonar station at river mile 8.5. Participation in the personal use fishery may increase due to increased bag limits and crowded conditions may be exacerbated.

BACKGROUND: The Kenai River late-run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan provides direction to the department for liberalizing the inriver sockeye salmon sport fishery and personal use fishery based upon the inseason evaluation of sockeye salmon abundance, a commensurate sliding scale of inriver goals, and a bag limit of three to six sockeye salmon. However there are no provisions to allow an increase in harvest opportunity for inriver users when the department determines that the abundance of late-run sockeye exceeds 4,000,000. At run strengths of greater than 4,000,000 sockeye salmon, the Alaska Board of Fisheries established an inriver goal range of 850,000-1,100,000 late-run sockeye

salmon to help ensure that the OEG of 500,000-1,000,000 fish is met after harvest by the sport fishery.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 208 - 5 AAC 21.360(h)(2). Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai River Sportfishing Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow the department to increase the sockeye salmon possession limit in the Kenai River sport fishery to 12 fish when the department determines that the abundance of late-run sockeye exceeds 2,000,000 fish. In addition, when the department determines that the abundance of late-run sockeye exceeds 4,000,000 this proposal would allow the department to increase the sockeye salmon bag limit to 9 fish and possession limit to 18 fish.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Subject to the requirement of achieving the lower end of the optimal escapement goal, the department shall manage the sport fishery on the Kenai River, except that portion of the Kenai River from its confluence with the Russian River to an ADF&G regulatory marker located 1,800 yards downstream as follows; fishing will occur seven days per week, 24 hours per day; and the bag and possession limit for the sport fishery is three sockeye salmon unless the department determines that the abundance of late-run sockeye exceeds 2,000,000 salmon, at which time the commissioner may, by emergency order, increase the bag and possession limit to six sockeye salmon.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would result in more harvest opportunity for inriver sport anglers during years of late-run sockeye salmon returns exceeding 2 million to the Kenai River. Inriver exploitation of sockeye salmon would increase. Participation in the sport fishery may increase due to increased bag and possession limits and crowded conditions may be exacerbated.

BACKGROUND: The Kenai River late-run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan provides direction to the department for liberalizing the inriver sockeye salmon sport fishery and personal use fishery based upon the inseason evaluation of sockeye salmon abundance, a commensurate sliding scale of inriver goals, and a bag limit of three to six sockeye salmon. However there are no provisions to allow an increase in harvest opportunity for inriver users when the department determines that the abundance of late-run sockeye exceeds 4,000,000. At run strengths of greater than 4,000,000 sockeye salmon, the Alaska Board of Fisheries established an inriver goal range of 850,000-1,100,000 late-run sockeye

salmon to help ensure that the OEG of 500,000-1,000,000 fish is met after harvest by the sport fishery.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.
COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 193 - 5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Rod and Randy Berg

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow the department to increase the Kenai River sockeye salmon bag and possession limit when liberalizations to the commercial fishery exceed those provided by the management plan. This proposal would also increase the bag and possession limit from 3 to 6 fish when sockeye salmon abundance exceeds 4,000,000 fish.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Subject to the requirement of achieving the lower end of the optimal escapement goal, the department shall manage the sport fishery on the Kenai River, except that portion of the Kenai River from its confluence with the Russian River to an ADF&G regulatory marker located 1,800 yards downstream as follows; fishing will occur seven days per week, 24 hours per day; and the bag and possession limit for the sport fishery is three sockeye salmon unless the department determines that the abundance of late-run sockeye exceeds 2,000,000 salmon, at which time the commissioner may, by emergency order, increase the bag and possession limit to six sockeye salmon.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would allow additional harvest opportunity for inriver sport anglers at all levels of sockeye salmon abundance if the allowable emergency order hours of commercial fishing periods exceed provisions outlined in the management plan. The bag limit increase from three to six sockeye salmon currently allowed by the plan at sockeye salmon abundance in excess of 2,000,000 fish would not occur unless allowable commercial fishing periods exceeded those hours outlined in the plan. During years when sockeye salmon abundance exceeds 4,000,000 fish the sport fishery would be liberalized at the start of the season and again if commercial fishing exceeded those hours outlined in the plan.

BACKGROUND: The Kenai River late-run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan provides direction to the department for liberalizing the commercial fishery, inriver sockeye salmon sport fishery and personal use fishery. These provisions are based upon three levels of sockeye salmon abundance that are linked with a commensurate sliding scale of inriver goals. Within each level of sockeye salmon abundance the allowable hours of extra commercial fishing periods per week increases however provisions allow for just

one increment for liberalization to the sport fishery (a bag limit increase from 3 to 6) when sockeye abundance exceeds 2,000,000 fish. At run strengths of less than 2,000,000 sockeye salmon, the Alaska Board of Fisheries established an inriver goal range of 650,000 – 850,000 sockeye salmon with allowable extra commercial fishing periods of no more than 24-hours per week; at run strengths of 2,000,000 – 4,000,000 sockeye salmon the board established an inriver goal range of 750,000 – 950,000 sockeye salmon with allowable extra commercial fishing periods of no more than 51-hours per week and at run strengths greater than 4,000,000 sockeye salmon, the board established an inriver goal range of 850,000 - 1,100,000 late-run sockeye salmon with allowable extra commercial fishing periods of no more than 84-hours per week. These goals help ensure that the OEG of 500,000-1,000,000 fish is met after harvest by the inriver sport fishery.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

KASILOF SOCKEYE SALMON MANAGEMENT PLAN

PROPOSAL 166: 5 AAC 21.365. Kasilof River Salmon Management plan.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai Peninsula Fishermen's Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would clarify that meeting the escapement goal is the primary objective for management, delete the currently required 48 hour closed window, allow the department to mange Kasilof River sockeye salmon independent of the Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan, and delete the regulatory language that specifies that achieving the lower end of the Kenai River sockeye salmon escapement goal shall take priority over not exceeding the upper end of the Kasilof River optimal escapement goal range of 150,000 to 300,000 sockeye salmon.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan governs the harvest of Kasilof River salmon excess to spawning escapement needs. It is the intent of the Board of Fisheries that Kasilof River salmon be harvested in the fisheries that have historically harvested them, including the methods, means, times, and locations of those fisheries. Openings in the areas historically fished must be consistent with escapement objectives for upper Cook Inlet salmon and with the Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plan. Beginning July 8, the set gillnet fishery in the Kasilof Section will be managed as specified in Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon plan.

Achieving the lower end of the Kenai River sockeye salmon escapement goal shall take priority over not exceeding the upper end of the Kasilof River optimal escapement goal range of 150,000 to 300,000 sockeye salmon. The commercial set gillnet fishery in the

Kasilof Section shall be managed will be opened for two weekly 12 hour periods. From the beginning of the fishing season through July 7, additional fishing periods or extend regular weekly fishing periods may be used, up to a maximum of 48 hours of additional fishing time per week. The fishery shall remain closed for at least one continuous 48-hour period per week. Beginning July 8, the set gillnet fishery in the Kasilof Section will be managed in concert with the Kenai River Late Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan. In addition, fishing may be limited during the regular weekly periods and any extra fishing periods to those waters within one-half mile of shore if the set gillnet fishery in the Kenai and East Forelands Sections are not open for the fishing period;

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would increase the harvest of Kasilof River sockeye salmon. Harvest rates of salmon would be dependent on management actions taken inseason. Incidental harvests of Kenai River sockeye and king salmon stocks would also likely occur.

BACKGROUND: The Kasilof River Sockeye Salmon Management Plan was first adopted following the 1985 season due to escapement in excess of 500,000 sockeye salmon into the Kasilof River. Until 2002 its sole function was to address the harvest within the special harvest area when the escapement exceeded 275,000 sockeye salmon. In 2002, many other provisions were added including the OEG. The stocking of fry into this system ceased after 2004 as a result of a court decision from the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. Prior to this decision, approximately 6 million fry had been planted annually. Prior to 1988, as many as 17 million fry were planted into Tustumena Lake. However this stocking level was reduced to 6 million beginning in 1988. In recent years, this hatchery production contributed approximately 10 percent to the total return. Concerning escapements, the Kasilof River biological escapement goal of 150,000-250,000, established in 1987, has been exceeded 8 of 9 years since 1999, and since the OEG (150,000-300,000) was adopted prior to the 2002 season, that goal has been met once and exceeded 5 of 6 years.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on the allocative aspects of this proposal. However, the department does **SUPPORTS** the BOF clarifying management priorities and the development of a more flexible management plan.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 167: 5 AAC 21.365. Kasilof River Salmon Management plan.

PROPOSED BY: John Higgins

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would make substantial changes to the current management plan. Significant changes would be to clarify that meeting the escapement goal is the primary objective, delete the currently required 48 hour closed window, allow the department to mange Kasilof River sockeye salmon independent of

the Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan, and delete the regulatory language that specifies that achieving the lower end of the Kenai River sockeye salmon escapement goal shall take priority over not exceeding the upper end of the Kasilof River optimal escapement goal range of 150,000 to 300,000 sockeye salmon. It asks the department to limit its use of the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area and deletes the sport fishing regulations which prohibit guides from fishing while clients are present and limit guides to one set of clients per day.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan governs the harvest of Kasilof River salmon excess to spawning escapement needs. It is the intent of the Board of Fisheries that Kasilof River salmon be harvested in the fisheries that have historically harvested them, including the methods, means, times, and locations of those fisheries. Openings in the areas historically fished must be consistent with escapement objectives for upper Cook Inlet salmon and with the Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plan. Beginning July 8, the set gillnet fishery in the Kasilof Section will be managed as specified in Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon plan.

Achieving the lower end of the Kenai River sockeye salmon escapement goal shall take priority over not exceeding the upper end of the Kasilof River optimal escapement goal range of 150,000 to 300,000 sockeye salmon. The commercial set gillnet fishery in the Kasilof Section shall be managed will be opened for two weekly 12 hour periods. From the beginning of the fishing season through July 7, additional fishing periods or extend regular weekly fishing periods may be used, up to a maximum of 48 hours of additional fishing time per week. The fishery shall remain closed for at least one continuous 48-hour period per week. Beginning July 8, the set gillnet fishery in the Kasilof Section will be managed in concert with the Kenai River Late Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan. In addition, fishing may be limited during the regular weekly periods and any extra fishing periods to those waters within one-half mile of shore if the set gillnet fishery in the Kenai and East Forelands Sections are not open for the fishing period;

A sport fishing guide may not sport fish while a client is present or is within the sport fishing guide's control or responsibility. During any one day, a sport fishing guide may guide only that client or group of clients initially guided by the sport fishing guide that day; different or additional clients may not be guided.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would increase the harvest of Kasilof River sockeye salmon. Harvest rates of salmon would be dependent on management actions taken inseason. Incidental harvests of Kenai River sockeye and king salmon stocks would also likely occur. This proposal would also increase the sport harvest of king salmon by allowing guides to fish while clients are present and to fish more than one set of clients in a day.

BACKGROUND: The Kasilof River Sockeye Salmon Management Plan was first adopted following the 1985 season due to escapement in excess of 500,000 sockeye salmon into the Kasilof River. Until 2002 its sole function was to address the harvest

within the special harvest area when the escapement exceeded 275,000 sockeye salmon. In 2002, many other provisions were added including the OEG. The stocking of fry into this system ceased after 2004 as a result of a court decision from the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. Prior to this decision, approximately 6 million fry had been planted annually. Prior to 1988, as many as 17 million fry were planted into Tustumena Lake. However this stocking level was reduced to 6 million beginning in 1988. In recent years, this hatchery production contributed approximately 10 percent to the return. Concerning escapements, the Kasilof River biological escapement goal (150,000-250,000) has been exceeded 8 of 9 years since 1999, and since the OEG (150,000-300,000) was adopted prior to the 2002 season, that goal has been met once and exceeded 5 of 6 years.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on the allocative aspects of this proposal. However, the department does **SUPPORTS** the BOF clarifying management priorities and the development of a more flexible management plan.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 168: 5 AAC 21.365. Kasilof River Salmon Management plan.

PROPOSED BY: South K-Beach Independent Fishermen's Alliance

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would make substantial changes to the current management plan. Significant changes would be to clarify that meeting the escapement goal is the primary objective, delete the currently required 48 hour closed window, allow the department to mange Kasilof River sockeye salmon independent of the Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan, and delete the regulatory language that specifies that achieving the lower end of the Kenai River sockeye salmon escapement goal shall take priority over not exceeding the upper end of the Kasilof River optimal escapement goal range of 150,000 to 300,000 sockeye salmon. It would also eliminate the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area and the sport fishing regulations which prohibit guides from fishing while clients are present and limit guides to one set of clients per day.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan governs the harvest of Kasilof River salmon excess to spawning escapement needs. It is the intent of the Board of Fisheries that Kasilof River salmon be harvested in the fisheries that have historically harvested them, including the methods, means, times, and locations of those fisheries. Openings in the areas historically fished must be consistent with escapement objectives for upper Cook Inlet salmon and with the Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plan. Beginning July 8, the set gillnet fishery in the Kasilof Section will be managed as specified in Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon plan.

A sport fishing guide may not sport fish while a client is present or is within the sport fishing guide's control or responsibility. During any one day, a sport fishing guide may guide only that client or group of clients initially guided by the sport fishing guide that day; different or additional clients may not be guided.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would increase the harvest of Kasilof River sockeye salmon. Harvest rates of salmon would be dependent on management actions taken inseason. Incidental harvests of Kasilof River king salmon and Kenai River sockeye and king salmon stocks would also likely occur. This proposal would also increase the sport harvest of king salmon by allowing guides to fish while clients are present and to fish more than one set of clients in a day.

BACKGROUND: The Kasilof River Sockeye Salmon Management Plan was first adopted following the 1985 season due to escapement in excess of 500,000 sockeye salmon into the Kasilof River. Until 2002 its sole function was to address the harvest within the special harvest area when the escapement exceeded 275,000 sockeye salmon. In 2002, many other provisions were added including the OEG. The stocking of fry into this system ceased after 2004 as a result of a court decision from the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. Prior to this decision, approximately 6 million fry had been planted annually. Prior to 1988, as many as 17 million fry were planted into Tustumena Lake. However this stocking level was reduced to 6 million beginning in 1988. In recent years, this hatchery production contributed approximately 10 percent to the return. Concerning escapements, the Kasilof River biological escapement goal (150,000-250,000) has been exceeded 8 of 9 years since 1999, and since the OEG (150,000-300,000) was adopted prior to the 2002 season, that goal has been met once and exceeded 5 of 6 years.

The numbers of naturally-produced king salmon in the escapement exceeded the goal in 2005 (1,903) and achieved the goal in 2006 (1,516) and 2007 (993), while escapement of surplus hatchery king salmon ranged from 652 to 1,052 king salmon. Total escapement of king salmon during 2002-2007 averaged over 3,300 fish.

There is no escapement goal for Kasilof River late-run king salmon. In 2005 the department began a late-run king salmon assessment program to estimate run-timing and spawning distribution. Information gained from this first year allowed the department to add a mark-recapture phase to the program to estimate abundance of late-run Kasilof River king salmon in 2006-2007. During the history of this fishery, king salmon runs into the Kasilof River have been sustaining.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on the allocative aspects of this proposal. The department does **SUPPORTS** the BOF clarifying management priorities and the development of a more flexible management plan.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 169: 5 AAC 21.365. Kasilof River Salmon Management plan.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai River Sportfishing Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would make substantial changes to the current management plan. It would ask the Board of Fisheries to increase the current optimum escapement goal by 50,000 sockeye salmon, decrease the size of the Kasilof Special Management Harvest Area, increase the threshold in order to fish the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area, manage the fishery in conjunction with the Kenai Section after July 8 to increase the current 48 hour closed window to two 36 hour windows, and close the season nine days earlier on August 1.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan governs the harvest of Kasilof River salmon excess to spawning escapement needs. It is the intent of the Board of Fisheries that Kasilof River salmon be harvested in the fisheries that have historically harvested them, including the methods, means, times, and locations of those fisheries. Openings in the areas historically fished must be consistent with escapement objectives for upper Cook Inlet salmon and with the Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plan. Beginning July 8, the set gillnet fishery in the Kasilof Section will be managed as specified in Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon plan and closes August 10.

In the Kasilof Section there are window and emergency order limits in place. Prior to July 8 there is a single 48 hour window and 48 hours of additional fishing time. After July 8 restrictions are dependant on the size of the Kenai return. The Kasilof River Special Harvest Area may be opened to the taking of salmon when it is projected that the Kasilof River sockeye salmon escapement will exceed 275,000 fish. The Kasilof River Special Harvest Area is defined as those waters within one and one-half miles of the navigational light located on the south bank of the Kasilof River, excluding waters of the Kasilof River upstream of ADF&G regulatory markers located near the terminus of the river and waters open to set gillnetting. This area is currently not included in the window closures in the Upper Subdistrict.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would increase the likelihood of exceeding the current Kasilof River escapement goals. Although the closure of 48 hours is reduced from July 8 forward, the closure of the fishery on August 1 would increase the likelihood of exceeding goals, especially in recent years when the runs are returning later. Increased escapements result in a loss of yield in current year and a reduction of the future production of Kasilof River sockeye salmon. This proposal may increase the sport effort and harvest of king and sockeye salmon and the personal use harvest of sockeye salmon.

BACKGROUND: The Kasilof River Sockeye Salmon Management Plan was first adopted following the 1985 season due to escapement in excess of 500,000 sockeye salmon into the Kasilof River. Until 2002 its sole function was to address the harvest

within the special harvest area when the escapement exceeded 275,000 sockeye salmon. In 2002, many other provisions were added including the OEG. The stocking of fry into this system ceased after 2004 as a result of a court decision from the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. Prior to this decision, approximately 6 million fry had been planted annually. Prior to 1988, as many as 17 million fry were planted into Tustumena Lake. However this stocking level was reduced to 6 million beginning in 1988. In recent years, this hatchery production contributed approximately 10 percent to the return. Concerning escapements, the Kasilof River biological escapement goal (150,000-250,000) has been exceeded 8 of 9 years since 1999, and since the OEG (150,000-300,000) was adopted prior to the 2002 season, that goal has been met once and exceeded 5 of 6 years.

There is no escapement goal for Kasilof River late-run king salmon. In 2005 the department began a late-run king salmon assessment program to estimate run-timing and spawning distribution. Information gained from this first year allowed the department to add a mark-recapture phase to the program to estimate abundance of late-run Kasilof River king salmon in 2006-2007. During the history of this fishery, king salmon runs into the Kasilof River have been sustaining.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on the allocative aspects of this proposal but is **OPPOSED** to this proposal on the biological issues it raises. Such a regulation change may lead to situations where the escapements far exceed established escapement objectives in many run scenarios. The department would lose its ability to manage most runs to meet the established OEG and SEG for sockeye salmon in the Kasilof River.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 177: 5 AAC 21.365. Kasilof River Salmon Management plan.

PROPOSED BY: Central Peninsula Advisory Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would direct the department to manage Kasilof River sockeye salmon primarily for commercial uses and to meet the biological escapement goal of 150,000 to 250,000 instead of the optimal escapement goal of 150,000-300,000. This proposal would also eliminate all window and emergency order restrictions.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? In the Kasilof Section there are window and emergency order limits in place. Prior to July 8 there is a single 48 hour window and 48 hours of additional fishing time. After July 8 restrictions are dependant on the size of the Kenai return. The Kasilof River Special Harvest Area may be opened to the taking of salmon when it is projected that the Kasilof River sockeye salmon escapement will exceed 275,000 fish. The Kasilof River Special Harvest Area is defined as those waters within one and one-half miles of the navigational light located on the

south bank of the Kasilof River, excluding waters of the Kasilof River upstream of ADF&G regulatory markers located near the terminus of the river and waters open to set gillnetting. This area is currently not included in the window closures in the Upper Subdistrict.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? If adopted the department would manage the fishery as it had prior to the creation of these aspects of the plan. Effects would be dependent on management actions based on the run strength. In larger runs, there would be an increase of Kasilof River sockeye salmon. Incidental harvests of Kasilof River king salmon and Kenai River sockeye and king salmon stocks would also likely occur.

BACKGROUND: The Kasilof River Sockeye Salmon Management Plan was first adopted following the 1985 season due to escapement in excess of 500,000 sockeye salmon into the Kasilof River. Until 2002 its sole function was to address the harvest within the special harvest area when the escapement exceeded 275,000 sockeye salmon. In 2002, many other provisions were added including the OEG. The stocking of fry into this system ceased after 2004 as a result of a court decision from the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. Prior to this decision, approximately 6 million fry had been planted annually. Prior to 1988, as many as 17 million fry were planted into Tustumena Lake. However this stocking level was reduced to 6 million beginning in 1988. In recent years, this hatchery production contributed approximately 10 percent to the return. Concerning escapements, the Kasilof River biological escapement goal (150,000-250,000) has been exceeded 8 of 9 years since 1999, and since the OEG (150,000-300,000) was adopted prior to the 2002 season, that goal has been met once and exceeded 5 of 6 years.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. However, the department does support the development of flexible management plans.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 180: 5 AAC 21.365. Kasilof River Salmon Management plan.

PROPOSED BY: United Cook Inlet Drift Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would repeal the priority directing the department to meet the lower end of the Kenai River sockeye salmon escapement goal over not exceeding the upper end of the Kasilof River optimal escapement goal range of 150,000 to 300,000 sockeye salmon.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Achieving the lower end of the Kenai River sockeye salmon escapement goal shall take priority over not exceeding the upper

end of the Kasilof River optimal escapement goal range of 150,000 to 300,000 sockeye salmon.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would have little effect on harvests unless other changes in the plan are made such as liberalization of the current windows or an increase in the number of hours that can be fished.

BACKGROUND: The Kasilof River Sockeye Salmon Management Plan was first adopted following the 1985 season due to escapement in excess of 500,000 sockeye salmon into the Kasilof River. Until 2002 its sole function was to address the harvest within the special harvest area when the escapement exceeded 275,000 sockeye salmon. In 2002, many other provisions were added including the OEG. The stocking of fry into this system ceased after 2004 as a result of a court decision from the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. Prior to this decision, approximately 6 million fry had been planted annually. Prior to 1988, as many as 17 million fry were planted into Tustumena Lake. However this stocking level was reduced to 6 million beginning in 1988. In recent years, this hatchery production contributed approximately 10 percent to the return. Concerning escapements, the Kasilof River biological escapement goal (150,000-250,000) has been exceeded 8 of 9 years since 1999, and since the OEG (150,000-300,000) was adopted prior to the 2002 season, that goal has been met once and exceeded 5 of 6 years.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 178: 5 AAC 21.365. Kasilof River Salmon Management plan.

PROPOSED BY: Robert L. Ball, Jr.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would increase the optimal escapement goal by 25,000 sockeye salmon at the lower end and 50,000 sockeye salmon at the upper end.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Achieving the lower end of the Kenai River sockeye salmon escapement goal shall take priority over not exceeding the upper end of the Kasilof River optimal escapement goal range of 150,000 to 300,000 sockeye salmon.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Escapement goals are established to provide maximum sustained yield. Increasing the optimal escapement goal would lead to reduced future production. Although inriver harvests

would increase for a few years, reduced future production would likely lead to reduced fishing opportunities for all users in the future.

BACKGROUND: The Kasilof River Sockeye Salmon Management Plan was first adopted following the 1985 season due to escapement in excess of 500,000 sockeye salmon into the Kasilof River. Until 2002 its sole function was to address the harvest within the special harvest area when the escapement exceeded 275,000 sockeye salmon. In 2002, many other provisions were added including the OEG. The stocking of fry into this system ceased after 2004 as a result of a court decision from the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. Prior to this decision, approximately 6 million fry had been planted annually. Prior to 1988, as many as 17 million fry were planted into Tustumena Lake. However this stocking level was reduced to 6 million beginning in 1988. In recent years, this hatchery production contributed approximately 10 percent to the return. Concerning escapements, the Kasilof River biological escapement goal (150,000-250,000) has been exceeded 8 of 9 years since 1999, and since the OEG (150,000-300,000) was adopted prior to the 2002 season, that goal has been met once and exceeded 5 of 6 years.

There is no escapement goal for Kasilof River late-run king salmon. In 2005 the department began a late-run king salmon assessment program to estimate run-timing and spawning distribution. Information gained from this first year allowed the department to add a mark-recapture phase to the program to estimate abundance of late-run Kasilof River king salmon in 2006-2007. During the history of this fishery, king salmon runs into the Kasilof River have been sustaining.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. However, the department is **OPPOSED** to such a regulation change that may lead to situations where the escapements far exceed established escapement objectives in many run scenarios.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 179: 5 AAC 21.365. Kasilof River Salmon Management plan.

PROPOSED BY: Jim McKenzie

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would increase the current optimal escapement goal by 50,000 sockeye salmon at the lower and upper end.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Achieving the lower end of the Kenai River sockeye salmon escapement goal shall take priority over not exceeding the upper end of the Kasilof River optimal escapement goal range of 150,000 to 300,000 sockeye salmon.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Escapement goals are established to provide maximum sustained yield. Increasing the optimal escapement goal would lead to reduced future production. Although inriver harvests would increase for a few years, reduced future production would likely lead to reduced fishing opportunities for all users in the future.

BACKGROUND: The Kasilof River Sockeye Salmon Management Plan was first adopted following the 1985 season due to escapement in excess of 500,000 sockeye salmon into the Kasilof River. Until 2002 its sole function was to address the harvest within the special harvest area when the escapement exceeded 275,000 sockeye salmon. In 2002, many other provisions were added including the OEG. The stocking of fry into this system ceased after 2004 as a result of a court decision from the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. Prior to this decision, approximately 6 million fry had been planted annually. Prior to 1988, as many as 17 million fry were planted into Tustumena Lake. However this stocking level was reduced to 6 million beginning in 1988. In recent years, this hatchery production contributed approximately 10 percent to the return. Concerning escapements, the Kasilof River biological escapement goal (150,000-250,000) has been exceeded 8 of 9 years since 1999, and since the OEG (150,000-300,000) was adopted prior to the 2002 season, that goal has been met once and exceeded 5 of 6 years.

There is no escapement goal for Kasilof River late-run king salmon. In 2005 the department began a late-run king salmon assessment program to estimate run-timing and spawning distribution. Information gained from this first year allowed the department to add a mark-recapture phase to the program to estimate abundance of late-run Kasilof River king salmon in 2006-2007. During the history of this fishery, king salmon runs into the Kasilof River have been sustaining.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. However, the department is **OPPOSED** to such a regulation change that may lead to situations where the escapements far exceed established escapement objectives in many run scenarios.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 181: 5 AAC 21.365(f)(3). Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai Peninsula Fishermen's Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would increase the amount of fishing area in the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area available to set gillnet fishermen by 600 feet and reduce the amount of fishing area available to drift gillnet fishermen by 600 feet.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Kasilof River Special Harvest Area may be opened when it is projected that the Kasilof River sockeye salmon escapement will exceed 275,000 fish. The Kasilof River Special Harvest Area is defined as those waters within one and one-half miles of the navigational light located on the south bank of the Kasilof River. Set gillnets may be operated only within 600 feet of the mean high tide mark and drift gillnets may not be operated in waters within 600 feet of the mean high tide mark. There is no minimum distance between gear, except that a gillnet may not be set or operated within 600 feet of a set gillnet located outside of the special harvest area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal may increase set gillnet harvests and reduce drift gillnet harvests. In general however, it is unknown what effect this change may have on overall harvest rates of sockeye and king salmon.

BACKGROUND: The Kasilof River Special Harvest Area was developed by the Board of Fisheries in 1986 to be used in a year when the Kasilof River sockeye salmon run is strong while the Kenai River sockeye salmon run is either average or below. The KRSHA has been opened by emergency order in three of the last four seasons to the taking of salmon by gillnets. The terminal harvest area was used more extensively in 2006 when directed fisheries on Kenai River sockeye salmon were closed for conservation reasons and the only tool available for managers to harvest the abundance of Kasilof River sockeye salmon was the KRSHA.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 182: 5 AAC 21.365(c)(4). Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Brent Johnson

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would provide another option for the department by fishing within 600 feet of shore instead of one-half mile when the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon run strength is projected to be less than two million fish and the 300,000 optimal escapement goal for the Kasilof River sockeye salmon may be exceeded.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? After July 15, if the department determines that the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon run strength is projected to be less than two million fish and the 300,000 optimal escapement goal for the Kasilof River sockeye salmon may be exceeded, the commissioner may, by emergency order, open

fishing for an additional 24-hours per week in the Kasilof Section within one-half mile of shore.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would increase the harvest of Kasilof River sockeye salmon stocks while minimizing Kenai River king and sockeye salmon harvests.

BACKGROUND: The Kasilof River Special Harvest Area was developed by the Board of Fisheries in 1986 to be used in a year when the Kasilof River sockeye salmon run is strong while the Kenai River sockeye salmon run is either average or below. The KRSHA has been opened by emergency order in three of the last four seasons to the taking of salmon by gillnets. The terminal harvest area was used more extensively in 2006 when directed fisheries on Kenai River sockeye salmon were closed for conservation reasons and the only tool available for managers to harvest the abundance of Kasilof River sockeye salmon was the KRSHA. In prior years the department opened the entire Kasilof Section within ½ mile of shore as a means of minimizing Kenai river sockeye harvests for conservation. The department continues to implement this strategy whenever window or hourly limits do not preclude this option. However the KRSHA use in 2006 has been viewed as a major reallocation by set gill-netters in the Kasilof Section.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. However, the department does support the development of flexible management plans. The department does have experience with opening the Kasilof Section within ½ mile of shore as a means of minimizing Kenai river sockeye harvests for conservation. The department continues to implement this strategy whenever window or hourly limits do not preclude this option. The department has the authority to reduce this area from ½ mile to 600 feet by emergency order.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 183: 5 AAC 21.365(f)(5). Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Brent Johnson

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow the department to reduce the open area of the KRSHA or terminal area to within ½ mile of shore for conservation reasons. The department currently has this authority and has reduced this area when it appears it is necessary.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? After July 15, if the department determines that the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon run strength is projected to be less than two million fish and the 300,000 optimal escapement goal for the Kasilof River sockeye salmon may be exceeded, the commissioner may, by emergency order, open fishing for an additional 24-hours per week in the Kasilof Section within one-half mile of

shore. Under subsection (f), set gillnets may be operated only within 600 feet of the mean high tide mark and drift gillnets may not be operated in waters within 600 feet of the mean high tide mark.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? There would be little change as we already have this authority.

BACKGROUND: The Kasilof River Special Harvest Area was developed by the Board of Fisheries in 1986 to be used in a year when the Kasilof River sockeye salmon run is strong while the Kenai River sockeye salmon run is either average or below. The Kasilof River Special Harvest Area has been opened by emergency order in three of the last four seasons to the taking of salmon by gillnets. The terminal harvest area was used more extensively in 2006 when directed fisheries on Kenai River sockeye salmon were closed for conservation reasons and the only tool available for managers to harvest the abundance of Kasilof River sockeye salmon was the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 184: 5 AAC 21.365(f)(1),(3). Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Gary Hollier

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would increase the amount of fishing area available to set gillnet fishermen by 2,400 feet and reduce amount of fishing area available to drift gillnet fishermen by 2,400 feet.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Kasilof River Special Harvest Area may be opened when it is projected that the Kasilof River sockeye salmon escapement will exceed 275,000 fish. The Kasilof River Special Harvest Area is defined as those waters within one and one-half miles of the navigational light located on the south bank of the Kasilof River. Set gillnets may be operated only within 600 feet of the mean high tide mark and drift gillnets may not be operated in waters within 600 feet of the mean high tide mark. There is no minimum distance between gear, except that a gillnet may not be set or operated within 600 feet of a set gillnet located outside of the special harvest area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? The open area for set gillnets would increase to 3,000 feet from 600 feet and the drift open area would be reduced by 2,400 feet and would be 5,000 feet. In effect, the first 3,000 feet would be open to set gillnets only and the area from 3,000 to 1.5 miles would be open for drift gillnets only. This proposal may increase set gillnet harvests and reduce drift gillnet

harvests. In general however, it is unknown what effect this change may have on overall harvest rates of sockeye and king salmon.

BACKGROUND: The Kasilof River Special Harvest Area was developed by the Board of Fisheries in 1986 to be used in a year when the Kasilof River sockeye salmon run is strong while the Kenai River sockeye salmon run is either average or below. The KRSHA has been opened by emergency order in three of the last four seasons to the taking of salmon by gillnets. The terminal harvest area was used more extensively in 2006 when directed fisheries on Kenai River sockeye salmon were closed for conservation reasons and the only tool available for managers to harvest the abundance of Kasilof River sockeye salmon was the KRSHA. The KRSHA boundaries are within 1.5 miles from shore, the first 600 feet is open to set gillnets only and the remainder is open to drift gillnets only.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 185: 5 AAC 21.365(f)(1),(3). Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Chuck Smith

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would add the area within one-half mile of the mean high tide mark of the Kasilof Section to the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Kasilof River Special Harvest Area may be opened when it is projected that the Kasilof River sockeye salmon escapement will exceed 275,000 fish. The Kasilof River Special Harvest Area is defined as those waters within one and one-half miles of the navigational light located on the south bank of the Kasilof River. Set gillnets may be operated only within 600 feet of the mean high tide mark and drift gillnets may not be operated in waters within 600 feet of the mean high tide mark. There is no minimum distance between gear, except that a gillnet may not be set or operated within 600 feet of a set gillnet located outside of the special harvest area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would increase the harvest rates of sockeye salmon bound for the Kasilof River while helping protect Kenai River bound stocks. It would still harvest Kenai River bound sockeye salmon but not to the extent they would be if the fishing area was one and one-half mile from shore. The effect on the harvest rate of king salmon is unknown.

BACKGROUND: The Kasilof River Special Harvest Area was developed by the Board of Fisheries in 1986 to be used in a year when the Kasilof River sockeye salmon run is strong while the Kenai River sockeye salmon run is either average or below. The Kasilof River Special Harvest Area has been opened by emergency order in three of the last four seasons to the taking of salmon by gillnets. The terminal harvest area was used more extensively in 2006 when directed fisheries on Kenai River sockeye salmon were closed for conservation reasons and the only tool available for managers to harvest the abundance of Kasilof River sockeye salmon was the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 186: 5 AAC 21.365(f)(3). Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Sarah Pellegrom

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would increase the amount of fishing area available to set gillnet fishermen by 600 feet and reduce amount of fishing area available to drift gillnet fishermen by 600 feet.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Kasilof River Special Harvest Area may be opened when it is projected that the Kasilof River sockeye salmon escapement will exceed 275,000 fish. The Kasilof River Special Harvest Area is defined as those waters within one and one-half miles of the navigational light located on the south bank of the Kasilof River. Set gillnets may be operated only within 600 feet of the mean high tide mark and drift gillnets may not be operated in waters within 600 feet of the mean high tide mark. There is no minimum distance between gear, except that a gillnet may not be set or operated within 600 feet of a set gillnet located outside of the special harvest area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal may increase set gillnet harvests and reduce drift gillnet harvests. In general however, it is unknown what effect this change may have on overall harvest rates of sockeye and king salmon.

BACKGROUND: The Kasilof River Special Harvest Area was developed by the Board of Fisheries in 1986 to be used in a year when the Kasilof River sockeye salmon run is strong while the Kenai River sockeye salmon run is below average. The Kasilof River Special Harvest Area has been opened by emergency order in three of the last four seasons to the taking of salmon by gillnets. The terminal harvest area was used more extensively in 2006 when directed fisheries on Kenai River sockeye salmon were closed

for conservation reasons and the only tool available for managers to harvest the abundance of Kasilof River sockeye salmon was the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 172: 5 AAC 21.365(f). Kasilof River Salmon Management plan.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai Peninsula Fishermen's Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would clarify how the department could use the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area. It also reduces the closed window and allows for additional fishing time in an area within one-half mile of the shore in order to harvest Kasilof River sockeye during times when Kenai River sockeye are in need of protection.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Kasilof River Special Harvest Area may be opened to the taking of salmon when it is projected that the Kasilof River sockeye salmon escapement will exceed 275,000 fish. The Kasilof River Special Harvest Area is defined as those waters within one and one-half miles of the navigational light located on the south bank of the Kasilof River, excluding waters of the Kasilof River upstream of ADF&G regulatory markers located near the terminus of the river and waters open to set gillnetting.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? If adopted, the department would manage the Kasilof Section for Kasilof River stocks as it was prior to the windows and hourly limitations being placed in regulation. In general, the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area would be used less, reducing conflicts observed in the past. It would also allow the department to fish the Kasilof Section within one-half mile of shore, which most likely would maintain current harvest rates of Kasilof River bound sockeye salmon but reduce the harvest rate of Kenai River bound sockeye salmon. This proposal would increase the harvest rates of sockeye salmon bound for the Kasilof River while helping protect Kenai River bound stocks. It would still harvest Kenai River bound sockeye salmon but not to the extent they would be if the fishing area was one and one-half mile from shore.

BACKGROUND: The Kasilof River Special Harvest Area was developed by the Board of Fisheries in 1986 to be used in a year when the Kasilof River sockeye salmon run is strong while the Kenai River sockeye salmon run is either average or below. The KRSHA has been opened by emergency order in three of the last four seasons to the taking of salmon by gillnets. The terminal harvest area was used more extensively in 2006 when directed fisheries on Kenai River sockeye salmon were closed for

conservation reasons and the only tool available for managers to harvest the abundance of Kasilof River sockeye salmon was the KRSHA. In 2007, this area was only used towards the end of the season. In large part because under current regulations, the commissioner can, and did, allow commercial fishing during the closed windows in the Kasilof Section only. Concerning escapements, the Kasilof River biological escapement goal (150,000-250,000) has been exceeded 8 of 9 years since 1999, and since the optimal escapement goal (150,000-300,000) was adopted prior to the 2002 season, that goal has been met once and exceeded 5 of 6 years.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. The KRSHA is a valuable tool in years of average to strong Kasilof River sockeye salmon runs and weak Kenai River sockeye salmon runs. In prior years, the department opened the entire Kasilof Section within ½-mile of shore as a means of minimizing Kenai river sockeye salmon harvests for conservation. The department continues to implement this strategy whenever window or hourly limits do not preclude this option.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 173: 5 AAC 21.365(f). Kasilof River Salmon Management plan.

PROPOSED BY: Joel Doner

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would clarify how the department could use the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area. It also reduces the closed window and allows for additional fishing time in an area within one-half mile of the shore in order to harvest Kasilof River sockeye during times when Kenai River sockeye are in need of protection.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Kasilof River Special Harvest Area may be opened to the taking of salmon when it is projected that the Kasilof River sockeye salmon escapement will exceed 275,000 fish. The Kasilof River Special Harvest Area is defined as those waters within one and one-half miles of the navigational light located on the south bank of the Kasilof River, excluding waters of the Kasilof River upstream of ADF&G regulatory markers located near the terminus of the river and waters open to set gillnetting.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? If adopted, the department would manage the Kasilof Section for Kasilof River stocks as it was prior to the windows and hourly limitations being placed in regulation. In general, the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area would be used less, reducing conflicts observed in the past. It would also allow the department to fish the Kasilof Section within one-half mile of shore, which most likely would maintain current harvest rates of Kasilof River bound sockeye salmon but reduce the harvest rate of Kenai River bound sockeye salmon. This proposal

would increase the harvest rates of sockeye salmon bound for the Kasilof River while helping protect Kenai River bound stocks. It would still harvest Kenai River bound sockeye salmon but not to the extent they would be if the fishing area was one and one-half mile from shore.

BACKGROUND: The Kasilof River Special Harvest Area was developed by the Board of Fisheries in 1986 to be used in a year when the Kasilof River sockeye salmon run is strong while the Kenai River sockeye salmon run is either average or below. The KRSHA has been opened by emergency order in three of the last four seasons to the taking of salmon by gillnets. The terminal harvest area was used more extensively in 2006 when directed fisheries on Kenai River sockeye salmon were closed for conservation reasons and the only tool available for managers to harvest the abundance of Kasilof River sockeye salmon was the KRSHA. In 2007, this area was only used towards the end of the season. In large part because under current regulations, the commissioner can, and did, allow commercial fishing during the closed windows in the Kasilof Section only. Concerning escapements, the Kasilof River biological escapement goal (150,000-250,000) has been exceeded 8 of 9 years since 1999, and since the optimal escapement goal (150,000-300,000) was adopted prior to the 2002 season, that goal has been met once and exceeded 5 of 6 years.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. The KRSHA is a valuable tool in years of average to strong Kasilof River sockeye salmon runs and weak Kenai River sockeye salmon runs. In prior years, the department opened the entire Kasilof Section within ½-mile of shore as a means of minimizing Kenai river sockeye salmon harvests for conservation. The department continues to implement this strategy whenever window or hourly limits do not preclude this option.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 174: 5 AAC 21.365(f). Kasilof River Salmon Management plan.

PROPOSED BY: Robert L. Ball, Jr.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would delete subsection (f), regulations governing the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area, of the Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Kasilof River Special Harvest Area may be opened to the taking of salmon when it is projected that the Kasilof River sockeye salmon escapement will exceed 275,000 fish. The Kasilof River Special Harvest Area is defined as those waters within one and one-half miles of the navigational light located on the south bank of the Kasilof River, excluding waters of the Kasilof River

upstream of ADF&G regulatory markers located near the terminus of the river and waters open to set gillnetting.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? In years when the Kenai River sockeye salmon run is poor but the Kasilof River sockeye salmon run is average or above, exploitation rates of sockeye salmon would decrease and exceeding the Kasilof River escapement goal would increase. Elimination of the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area would reduce conflicts between set and gill net fishermen that have been observed in the past. This proposal may increase the sport effort and harvest of king and sockeye salmon and the personal use harvest of sockeye salmon.

BACKGROUND: The Kasilof River Special Harvest Area was developed by the Board of Fisheries in 1986 to be used in a year when the Kasilof River sockeye salmon run is strong while the Kenai River sockeye salmon run is either average or below. The KRSHA has been opened by emergency order in three of the last four seasons to the taking of salmon by gillnets. The terminal harvest area was used more extensively in 2006 when directed fisheries on Kenai River sockeye salmon were closed for conservation reasons and the only tool available for managers to harvest the abundance of Kasilof River sockeye salmon was the KRSHA. In 2007, this area was only used towards the end of the season. In large part because under current regulations, the commissioner can, and did, allow commercial fishing during the closed windows in the Kasilof Section only. Concerning escapements, the Kasilof River biological escapement goal (150,000-250,000) has been exceeded 8 of 9 years since 1999, and since the optimal escapement goal (150,000-300,000) was adopted prior to the 2002 season, that goal has been met once and exceeded 5 of 6 years.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. The KRSHA is a valuable tool in years of average to strong Kasilof River sockeye salmon runs and weak Kenai River sockeye salmon runs. In prior years, the department opened the entire Kasilof Section within ½-mile of shore as a means of minimizing Kenai river sockeye salmon harvests for conservation. The department continues to implement this strategy whenever window or hourly limits do not preclude this option.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 175: 5 AAC 21.365. Kasilof River Salmon Management plan.

PROPOSED BY: Michael Craig

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would create corridors or place limits on the amount of time that can be fished in the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area. This proposal also would require nets to be manned and picked in a timely manner.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Kasilof River Special Harvest Area may be opened to the taking of salmon when it is projected that the Kasilof River sockeye salmon escapement will exceed 275,000 fish. The Kasilof River Special Harvest Area is defined as those waters within one and one-half miles of the navigational light located on the south bank of the Kasilof River, excluding waters of the Kasilof River upstream of ADF&G regulatory markers located near the terminus of the river and waters open to set gillnetting.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Because the corridors and time restrictions is not defined, in is unclear to the exact effects this proposal would have. However, in years when the Kenai River sockeye salmon run is poor but the Kasilof River sockeye salmon run is average or above, exploitation rates of sockeye salmon would decrease and exceeding the Kasilof River escapement goal would increase. This proposal may increase the sport effort and harvest of king and sockeye salmon and the personal use harvest of sockeye salmon.

BACKGROUND: The Kasilof River Special Harvest Area was developed by the Board of Fisheries in 1986 to be used in a year when the Kasilof River sockeye salmon run is strong while the Kenai River sockeye salmon run is either average or below. The KRSHA has been opened by emergency order in three of the last four seasons to the taking of salmon by gillnets. The terminal harvest area was used more extensively in 2006 when directed fisheries on Kenai River sockeye salmon were closed for conservation reasons and the only tool available for managers to harvest the abundance of Kasilof River sockeye salmon was the KRSHA. In 2007, this area was only used towards the end of the season. In large part because under current regulations, the commissioner can, and did, allow commercial fishing during the closed windows in the Kasilof Section only. Concerning escapements, the Kasilof River biological escapement goal (150,000-250,000) has been exceeded 8 of 9 years since 1999, and since the optimal escapement goal (150,000-300,000) was adopted prior to the 2002 season, that goal has been met once and exceeded 5 of 6 years.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. The KRSHA is a valuable tool in years of average to strong Kasilof River sockeye salmon runs and weak Kenai River sockeye salmon runs. In prior years, the department opened the entire Kasilof Section within ½-mile of shore as a means of minimizing Kenai river sockeye salmon harvests for conservation. The department continues to implement this strategy whenever window or hourly limits do not preclude this option.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 176: 5 AAC 21.365. Kasilof River Salmon Management plan.

PROPOSED BY: Robert L. Ball, Jr.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would place two 24 hour windows in the Kasilof Section, including the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area when it is used.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? In the Kasilof Section there are window and emergency order limits in place. Prior to July 8 there is a single 48 hour window and 48 hours of additional fishing time. After July 8 restrictions are dependant on the size of the Kenai return. The Kasilof River Special Harvest Area may be opened to the taking of salmon when it is projected that the Kasilof River sockeye salmon escapement will exceed 275,000 fish. The Kasilof River Special Harvest Area is defined as those waters within one and one-half miles of the navigational light located on the south bank of the Kasilof River, excluding waters of the Kasilof River upstream of ADF&G regulatory markers located near the terminus of the river and waters open to set gillnetting. This area is currently not included in the window closures in the Upper Subdistrict.

After July 15, if the department determines that the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon run strength is projected to be less than two million fish and the 300,000 optimal escapement goal for the Kasilof River sockeye salmon may be exceeded, the commissioner may, by emergency order, open fishing for an additional 24-hours per week in the Kasilof Section within one-half mile of shore.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? In years when the Kenai River sockeye salmon run is poor but the Kasilof River sockeye salmon run is average or above, exploitation rates of sockeye salmon would most likely decrease and the likelihood of exceeding the Kasilof River escapement goal would increase. This proposal may increase the sport effort and harvest of king and sockeye salmon and the personal use harvest of sockeye salmon.

BACKGROUND: The Kasilof River Special Harvest Area was developed by the Board of Fisheries in 1986 to be used in a year when the Kasilof River sockeye salmon run is strong while the Kenai River sockeye salmon run is either average or below. The KRSHA has been opened by emergency order in three of the last four seasons to the taking of salmon by gillnets. The terminal harvest area was used more extensively in 2006 when directed fisheries on Kenai River sockeye salmon were closed for conservation reasons and the only tool available for managers to harvest the abundance of Kasilof River sockeye salmon was the KRSHA. In 2007, this area was only used towards the end of the season. In large part because under current regulations, the commissioner can, and did, allow commercial fishing during the closed windows in the Kasilof Section only. Concerning escapements, the Kasilof River biological escapement goal (150,000-250,000) has been exceeded 8 of 9 years since 1999, and since the optimal escapement goal (150,000-300,000) was adopted prior to the 2002 season, that goal has been met once and exceeded 5 of 6 years.

There is no escapement goal for Kasilof River late-run king salmon. In 2005 the department began a late-run king salmon assessment program to estimate run-timing and

spawning distribution. Information gained from this first year allowed the department to add a mark-recapture phase to the program to estimate abundance of late-run Kasilof River king salmon in 2006-2007. The current management plan is more restrictive than what it historically has been during the history of this fishery and king salmon runs into the Kasilof River have been sustainable.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. The KRSHA is a valuable tool in years of average to strong Kasilof River sockeye salmon runs and weak Kenai River sockeye salmon runs. In prior years, the department opened the entire Kasilof Section within ½-mile of shore as a means of minimizing Kenai river sockeye salmon harvests for conservation. The department continues to implement this strategy whenever window or hourly limits do not preclude this option.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 170: 5 AAC 21.365(f). Kasilof River Salmon Management plan.

PROPOSED BY: South K-Beach Independent Fishermen's Alliance

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would require the South K-Beach statistical area (244-31), located just north of the Kasilof River to the Blanchard Line, to be open when the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area is open.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Kasilof River Special Harvest Area may be opened to the taking of salmon when it is projected that the Kasilof River sockeye salmon escapement will exceed 275,000 fish. The Kasilof River Special Harvest Area is defined as those waters within one and one-half miles of the navigational light located on the south bank of the Kasilof River, excluding waters of the Kasilof River upstream of ADF&G regulatory markers located near the terminus of the river and waters open to set gillnetting.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would increase the harvest of sockeye salmon bound for the Kasilof River, which are migrating from the north. It would also increase harvests of sockeye and king salmon bound for the Kenai River.

BACKGROUND: The Kasilof River Special Harvest Area was developed by the Board of Fisheries in 1986 to be used in a year when the Kasilof River sockeye salmon run is strong while the Kenai River sockeye salmon run is either average or below. During the past three seasons, the KRSHA has been opened by emergency order to the taking of salmon by gillnets when it was projected that the Kasilof River sockeye salmon escapement would exceed 275,000 fish. The terminal harvest area was used more extensively in 2006 when directed fisheries on Kenai River sockeye salmon were closed for conservation reasons and the only tool available for managers to harvest the

abundance of Kasilof River sockeye salmon was the KRSHA. Although 680,000 sockeye salmon were commercially harvested in the terminal harvest area in 2006, the Kasilof River OEG of 150,000 to 300,000 was exceeded by 67,000 sockeye salmon. The king salmon harvest was 2,518 in this same area. Concerning escapements, the Kasilof River biological escapement goal (150,000-250,000) has been exceeded 8 of 9 years since 1999, and since the optimal escapement goal (150,000-300,000) was adopted prior to the 2002 season, that goal has been met once and exceeded 5 of 6 years.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on the allocative aspects of this proposal but is **OPPOSED** to management measures that are not necessary and would possibly increase the harvest of Kenai River sockeye and king salmon while other areas of the Kasilof Section are closed for conservation In prior years, the department opened the entire Kasilof Section within ½ mile of shore as a means of minimizing Kenai River sockeye salmon harvests for conservation. The department continues to implement this strategy whenever window or hourly limits do not preclude this option. Opening the area north of the river only would be a major reallocation.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 171: 5 AAC 21.365(e). Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Jeff Beaudoin

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would delete subsection (e), which addresses sport fishing regulations, from the Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? In addition to the provisions of 5 AAC 56 and 5 AAC 57.160 applicable to the Kasilof River, from January 1 through July 31, the guided sport fishery for early-run and late-run Kasilof River king salmon will be managed so that a sport fishing guide may not sport fish while a client is present or is within the sport fishing guide's control or responsibility. A sport fishing guide may provide assistance to a client with a disability. During any one day, a sport fishing guide may guide only that client or group of clients initially guided by the sport fishing guide that day; different or additional clients may not be guided.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? There would be no effect on the sport fishery if these provisions were moved to Chapter 56.
BACKGROUND: The Kasilof River Sockeye Salmon Management Plan was first adopted following the 1985 season. In 2002 many other provisions were added including the sport fish regulations. The department considers this a housekeeping proposal.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** moving, not deleting, the sport fishing regulations identified in this proposal. Sport fishing regulations under 5

AAC 21.365 would be better served with other Kasilof River sport fishing regulations found under 5 AAC 56.XXX. The sport fish definitions in (g) should also accompany the realignment.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that adoption of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

COMMITTEE D: Kenai Peninsula Personal Use/Kenai River Resident Species (Total proposals: 31)

Personal Use Fishing: 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224

Kenai River Resident Species: 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252

KENAI PENINSULA PERSONAL USE

PROPOSAL 211 - 5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: John McCombs

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would amend the personal use management plan for Upper Cook Inlet to link the opening date of the Kenai River personal use dip net fishery to the abundance of sockeye salmon by not allowing the dip net fishery to begin until 450,000 sockeye salmon have enumerated at the department sonar.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Subject to the requirement of achieving the lower end of the optimal escapement goal, the department shall provide for a personal use dip net fishery in the lower Kenai River. In the Kenai River salmon may be taken by dip net from July 10 through July 31, seven days per week, from 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. The commissioner may extend, by emergency order, the personal use fishery to 24-hours per day if the department determines that the abundance of the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon is greater than two million.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? The opening date of the fishery would likely be delayed by some unknown number of days. Delaying the opening date would reduce opportunity to harvest sockeye salmon. Personal use harvest of sockeye salmon would likely shift from the mid-point or later segment of the run rather than from throughout the return. A delay in the opening date of the Kenai River personal use fishery could result in higher concentrated fishing effort. In addition, sockeye salmon harvest and congestion at the Kasilof River personal use fishery could increase.

BACKGROUND: The upper Cook Inlet personal use salmon fisheries are managed by the department under the terms of the Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan (5 AAC 77.540). This plan provides for a personal use salmon gillnet fishery at the mouth of Kasilof River and salmon dip net fisheries in the Kenai and Kasilof rivers and Fish Creek in northern Cook Inlet. This plan was in effect for the 1981 season and was later adopted as regulation by the board in 1982. The plan has undergone several amendments since that time.

Prior to 1996, the gillnet and dip net fisheries at both the Kenai and Kasilof rivers did not always occur each year. These dip net fisheries were set to open when a specified sonar count was achieved. During years when the sonar count was not achieved, the dip net fishery scheduled for either the Kenai or Kasilof rivers did not occur.

Beginning with the 1996 season, the board established a season of July 10 - August 5 (later amended to July 31) for the dip net fishery in the Kenai River. Establishing a season provided predictability to these fisheries. The household annual limit was 25 salmon for the head of the household and 10 additional salmon per member of the household of which only one king salmon could be retained per household. The regulations adopted by the board established a personal use dip net fishery that had season dates, which were independent of the abundance of returning salmon, and were not tied to the fisheries management plans for other user groups.

In 2002, the fishery was modified to manage the fishery more conservatively until inseason abundance information becomes available. The season dates remained unchanged but the daily hours was reduced to 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. until the department could project that the total Kenai River sockeye salmon late run would exceed 2.0 million fish. When the department could determine that the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon would exceed 2.0 million fish, the daily hours the Kenai River personal use dip net fishery could be liberalized to 24 hours per day until the season closed on July 31.

The Kenai River personal use dip net fishery was closed inseason by emergency order in 1998 due to a weak return of late-run sockeye salmon to the Kenai River and in 2006 due to a late return.. From 1999-2001 and 2007, the Kenai River personal use dip net fishery was not liberalized or restricted due to the average strengths of the sockeye salmon runs. The Kenai River personal use dip net fishery was liberalized annually during the 2002-2005 and 2007 seasons. The fishery was liberalized by increasing the daily hours the fishery is open and was the result of the sockeye salmon runs that were projected to be greater than 2.0 million fish during those years.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. The management plan in regulation provides direction to liberalize and to also restrict the fishery based upon meeting abundance goals outlined in the plan when circumstances require.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 212 - 5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Steve Vanek

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would link the opening date of the Kenai River personal use dip net fishery to abundance of sockeye salmon by not allowing the dip net fishery to begin until the lower end of the sockeye salmon Sustainable Escapement Goal has passed the department sonar.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Subject to the requirement of achieving the lower end of the optimal escapement goal, the department shall provide for a personal use dip net fishery in the lower Kenai River. In the Kenai River salmon may be taken by dip net from July 10 through July 31, seven days per week, from 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. The commissioner may extend, by emergency order, the personal use fishery to 24-hours per day if the department determines that the abundance of the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon is greater than two million.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? The opening date of the fishery would likely be delayed by some unknown number of days. Delaying the opening date would reduce opportunity to harvest sockeye salmon. Personal use harvest of sockeye salmon would likely shift from the mid-point or later segment of the run rather than from throughout the return. A delay in the opening date of the Kenai River personal use fishery could result in higher concentrated fishing effort. In addition, sockeye salmon harvest and congestion at the Kasilof River personal use fishery could increase.

BACKGROUND: The upper Cook Inlet personal use salmon fisheries are managed by the department under the terms of the Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan (5 AAC 77.540). This plan provides for a personal use salmon gillnet fishery at the mouth of Kasilof River and salmon dip net fisheries in the Kenai and Kasilof rivers and Fish Creek in northern Cook Inlet. This plan was in effect for the 1981 season and was later adopted as regulation by the board in 1982. The plan has undergone several amendments since that time.

Prior to 1996, the gillnet and dip net fisheries at both the Kenai and Kasilof rivers did not always occur each year. These dip net fisheries were set to open when a specified sonar count was achieved. During years when the sonar count was not achieved, the dip net fishery scheduled for either the Kenai or Kasilof rivers did not occur.

Beginning with the 1996 season, the board established a season of July 10 - August 5 (later amended to July 31) for the dip net fishery in the Kenai River. Establishing a season provided predictability to these fisheries. The household annual limit was 25 salmon for the head of the household and 10 additional salmon per member of the household of which only one king salmon could be retained per household. The regulations adopted by the board established a personal use dip net fishery that had season dates, which were independent of the abundance of returning salmon, and were not tied to the fisheries management plans for other user groups.

In 2002, the fishery was modified to manage the fishery more conservatively until inseason abundance information becomes available. The season dates remained

unchanged but the daily hours was reduced to 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. until the department could project that the total Kenai River sockeye salmon late run would exceed 2.0 million fish. When the department could determine that the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon would exceed 2.0 million fish, the daily hours the Kenai River personal use dip net fishery could be liberalized to 24 hours per day until the season closed on July 31.

The Kenai River personal use dip net fishery was closed inseason by emergency order in 1998 due to a weak return of late-run sockeye salmon to the Kenai River and in 2006 due to a late return.. From 1999-2001 and 2007, the Kenai River personal use dip net fishery was not liberalized or restricted due to the average strengths of the sockeye salmon runs. The Kenai River personal use dip net fishery was liberalized annually during the 2002-2005 and 2007 seasons. The fishery was liberalized by increasing the daily hours the fishery is open and was the result of the sockeye salmon runs that were projected to be greater than 2.0 million fish during those years.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. The management plan in regulation provides direction to liberalize and to also restrict the fishery based upon meeting abundance goals outlined in the plan when circumstances require.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 213 - 5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Teague Vanek

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would link the opening date of the Kenai River personal use dip net fishery to abundance of sockeye salmon by not allowing the dip net fishery to begin until some number of sockeye has passed the department sonar by certain dates.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Subject to the requirement of achieving the lower end of the optimal escapement goal, the department shall provide for a personal use dip net fishery in the lower Kenai River. In the Kenai River salmon may be taken by dip net from July 10 through July 31, seven days per week, from 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. The commissioner may extend, by emergency order, the personal use fishery to 24-hours per day if the department determines that the abundance of the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon is greater than two million.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? The opening date of the fishery would likely be delayed by some unknown number of days. Delaying the opening date would reduce opportunity to harvest sockeye salmon. Personal use harvest of sockeye salmon would likely shift from the mid-point or later segment of the

run rather than from throughout the return. A delay in the opening date of the Kenai River personal use fishery could result in higher concentrated fishing effort. In addition, sockeye salmon harvest and congestion at the Kasilof River personal use fishery could increase.

BACKGROUND: The upper Cook Inlet personal use salmon fisheries are managed by the department under the terms of the Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan (5 AAC 77.540). This plan provides for a personal use salmon gillnet fishery at the mouth of Kasilof River and salmon dip net fisheries in the Kenai and Kasilof rivers and Fish Creek in northern Cook Inlet. This plan was in effect for the 1981 season and was later adopted as regulation by the board in 1982. The plan has undergone several amendments since that time.

Prior to 1996, the gillnet and dip net fisheries at both the Kenai and Kasilof rivers did not always occur each year. These dip net fisheries were set to open when a specified sonar count was achieved. During years when the sonar count was not achieved, the dip net fishery scheduled for either the Kenai or Kasilof rivers did not occur.

Beginning with the 1996 season, the board established a season of July 10 - August 5 (later amended to July 31) for the dip net fishery in the Kenai River. Establishing a season provided predictability to these fisheries. The household annual limit was 25 salmon for the head of the household and 10 additional salmon per member of the household of which only one king salmon could be retained per household. The regulations adopted by the board established a personal use dip net fishery that had season dates, which were independent of the abundance of returning salmon, and were not tied to the fisheries management plans for other user groups.

In 2002, the fishery was modified to manage the fishery more conservatively until inseason abundance information becomes available. The season dates remained unchanged but the daily hours was reduced to 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. until the department could project that the total Kenai River sockeye salmon late run would exceed 2.0 million fish. When the department could determine that the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon would exceed 2.0 million fish, the daily hours the Kenai River personal use dip net fishery could be liberalized to 24 hours per day until the season closed on July 31.

The Kenai River personal use dip net fishery was closed inseason by emergency order in 1998 due to a weak return of late-run sockeye salmon to the Kenai River and in 2006 due to a late return.. From 1999-2001 and 2007, the Kenai River personal use dip net fishery was not liberalized or restricted due to the average strengths of the sockeye salmon runs. The Kenai River personal use dip net fishery was liberalized annually during the 2002-2005 and 2007 seasons. The fishery was liberalized by increasing the daily hours the fishery is open and was the result of the sockeye salmon runs that were projected to be greater than 2.0 million fish during those years.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. The management plan in regulation provides direction to liberalize and to also restrict the fishery based upon meeting abundance goals outlined in the plan when circumstances require.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 214 - 5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Patricia L. Shearer and Sheila Caloona

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow the Kenai River personal use dip net fishery season to be extended if it was previously closed then reopened inseason by emergency order.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Subject to the requirement of achieving the lower end of the optimal escapement goal, the department shall provide for a personal use dip net fishery in the lower Kenai River. In the Kenai River salmon may be taken by dip net from July 10 through July 31, seven days per week, from 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. The commissioner may extend, by emergency order, the personal use fishery to 24-hours per day if the department determines that the abundance of the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon is greater than two million.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? It would provide additional opportunity for residents of the state to harvest salmon under personal use regulations. Exploitation of coho salmon in the personal use dip net fishery may increase if the season was extended appreciably into August.

BACKGROUND: The upper Cook Inlet personal use salmon fisheries are managed by the department under the terms of the Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan (5 AAC 77.540). This plan provides for a personal use salmon gillnet fishery at the mouth of Kasilof River and salmon dip net fisheries in the Kenai and Kasilof rivers and Fish Creek in northern Cook Inlet. This plan was in effect for the 1981 season and was later adopted as regulation by the board in 1982. The plan has undergone several amendments since that time.

Prior to 1996, the gillnet and dip net fisheries at both the Kenai and Kasilof rivers did not always occur each year. These dip net fisheries were set to open when a specified sonar count was achieved. During years when the sonar count was not achieved, the dip net fishery scheduled for either the Kenai or Kasilof rivers did not occur.

Beginning with the 1996 season, the board established a season of July 10 - August 5 (later amended to July 31) for the dip net fishery in the Kenai River. Establishing a season provided predictability to these fisheries. The household annual limit was 25

salmon for the head of the household and 10 additional salmon per member of the household of which only one king salmon could be retained per household. The regulations adopted by the board established a personal use dip net fishery that had season dates, which were independent of the abundance of returning salmon, and were not tied to the fisheries management plans for other user groups.

In 2002, the fishery was modified to manage the fishery more conservatively until inseason abundance information becomes available. The season dates remained unchanged but the daily hours was reduced to 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. until the department could project that the total Kenai River sockeye salmon late run would exceed 2.0 million fish. When the department could determine that the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon would exceed 2.0 million fish, the daily hours the Kenai River personal use dip net fishery could be liberalized to 24 hours per day until the season closed on July 31.

The Kenai River personal use dip net fishery was closed inseason by emergency order in 1998 due to a weak return of late-run sockeye salmon to the Kenai River and in 2006 due to a late return.. From 1999-2001 and 2007, the Kenai River personal use dip net fishery was not liberalized or restricted due to the average strengths of the sockeye salmon runs. The Kenai River personal use dip net fishery was liberalized annually during the 2002-2005 and 2007 seasons. The fishery was liberalized by increasing the daily hours the fishery is open and was the result of the sockeye salmon runs that were projected to be greater than 2.0 million fish during those years.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 215 - 5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai River Sport Fishing Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would increase the total annual limit for each personal use salmon fishing permit from 25 salmon to 50 salmon for the head of a household and from 10 salmon to 15 salmon for each dependent of the permit holder in the Kenai River personal use fishery when the number of sockeye salmon past the sonar exceeds 850,000 fish.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Personal use salmon fisheries are open only to residents of the state. In Cook Inlet, only one personal use salmon permit may be issued to each household per year. The total annual limit for each personal use

salmon fishing permit is 25 salmon for the head of a household and 10 salmon for each dependent of the permit holder.

In the Kenai River salmon may be taken by dip net from July 10 through July 31, seven days per week, from 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. The commissioner may extend, by emergency order, the personal use fishery to 24-hours per day if the department determines that the abundance of the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon is greater than two million. Only one king salmon may be retained from the Kenai River dip net fishery.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? The harvest potential would increase by 100% for each permit holder and by 33% for each dependant allowed to fish on a permit. The actual harvest would increase by some unknown amount and is dependant upon the number of fish they desire to harvest. It would likely take more time for permit holders to reach the permit limit therefore requiring them to fish longer each day or require them to fish additional days. The increased limit may attract more participants to the fishery. Consequently, congestion at access points and in the area the fishery occurs may increase on some days. Differing limits for the Kenai River and the rest of Cook Inlet would add complexity to the recording requirement. In addition, permit holders may turn in permit harvest cards after attaining the allowable limit under a normal fishery then subsequently require another permit if the limit was increased due to abundance.

BACKGROUND: The upper Cook Inlet personal use salmon fisheries are managed by the department under the terms of the Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan (5 AAC 77.540). This plan provides for a personal use salmon gillnet fishery at the mouth of Kasilof River and salmon dip net fisheries in the Kenai and Kasilof rivers and Fish Creek in northern Cook Inlet. This plan was in effect for the 1981 season and was later adopted as regulation by the board in 1982. The plan has undergone several amendments since that time.

Prior to 1996, the gillnet and dip net fisheries at both the Kenai and Kasilof rivers did not always occur each year. These dip net fisheries were set to open when a specified sonar count was achieved. During years when the sonar count was not achieved, the dip net fishery scheduled for either the Kenai or Kasilof rivers did not occur.

Beginning with the 1996 season, the board established a season of July 10 - August 5 (later amended to July 31) for the dip net fishery in the Kenai River. Establishing a season provided predictability to these fisheries. The household annual limit was 25 salmon for the head of the household and 10 additional salmon per member of the household of which only one king salmon could be retained per household. The regulations adopted by the board established a personal use dip net fishery that had season dates, which were independent of the abundance of returning salmon, and were not tied to the fisheries management plans for other user groups.

In 2002, the fishery was modified to manage the fishery more conservatively until inseason abundance information becomes available. The season dates remained

unchanged but the daily hours was reduced to 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. until the department could project that the total Kenai River sockeye salmon late run would exceed 2.0 million fish. When the department could determine that the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon would exceed 2.0 million fish, the daily hours the Kenai River personal use dip net fishery could be liberalized to 24 hours per day until the season closed on July 31

The Kenai River personal use dip net fishery was closed inseason by emergency order in 1998 due to a weak return of late-run sockeye salmon to the Kenai River and in 2006 due to a late return.. From 1999-2001 and 2007, the Kenai River personal use dip net fishery was not liberalized or restricted due to the average strengths of the sockeye salmon runs. The Kenai River personal use dip net fishery was liberalized annually during the 2002-2005 and 2007 seasons. The fishery was liberalized by increasing the daily hours the fishery is open and was the result of the sockeye salmon runs that were projected to be greater than 2.0 million fish during those years.

The 1999-2003 average harvest of nearly 163,000 sockeye salmon in the Kenai River is nearly a seven-fold increase from the 1987-1995 average of slightly less than 23,000 fish. From 2004-2006 sockeye salmon harvest have averaged 228,652, 26,964 and 49,203 in the Kenai River dip net, Kasilof River set gillnet and Kasilof River dip net fisheries, respectively. Permit returns for the Cook Inlet personal use fisheries for the years 2004 - 2006 indicate that an average of 22% of permit holders attained the allowable permit limit. A larger percentage of households with 2 or less individuals attained the allowable permit limit (average=14%), compared to the percentage of household with more than 2 individuals (average=7%) from 2004 - 2006.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 216 - 5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Robert L. Ball, Jr.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would double the annual limit for each personal use salmon fishing permit from 25 salmon to 50 salmon for the head of household and from 10 to 20 salmon for each dependent of the permit holder in the Kasilof River personal use fishery when the Kasilof River Optimal Escapement Goal of 150,000 to 300,000 is projected to be exceeded.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Personal use salmon fisheries are open only to residents of the state. In Cook Inlet, only one personal use salmon permit may be

issued to each household per year. The total annual limit for each personal use salmon fishing permit is 25 salmon for the head of a household and 10 salmon for each dependent of the permit holder.

In the Kasilof River salmon may be taken by dip net from June 25 through August 7, 24-hours per day. Salmon may be taken with a set gillnet in a designated area at the mouth of the Kasilof River from June 15 through June 24, daily from 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? The harvest potential of each permit holder and each dependant would increase 100%. The actual harvest would increase by some unknown amount and is dependant upon the number of fish they desire to harvest. It would likely take more time for permit holders to reach the permit limit therefore requiring them to fish longer each day or require them to fish additional days. The increased limit may attract more participants to the fishery. Consequently, congestion at access points and in the area the fishery occurs may increase on some days. Differing limits for the Kasilof River and the rest of Cook Inlet would add complexity to the recording requirement. In addition, permit holders may turn in permit harvest cards after attaining the allowable limit under a normal fishery then subsequently require another permit if the limit was increased due to abundance.

BACKGROUND: The upper Cook Inlet personal use salmon fisheries are managed by the department under the terms of the Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan (5 AAC 77.540). This plan provides for a personal use salmon gillnet fishery at the mouth of Kasilof River and salmon dip net fisheries in the Kenai and Kasilof rivers and Fish Creek in northern Cook Inlet. This plan was in effect for the 1981 season and was later adopted as regulation by the board in 1982. The plan has undergone several amendments since that time. The Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan has no provision to change (increase or decrease) the salmon limit for personal use permits.

Prior to 1996, the gillnet and dip net fisheries at both the Kenai and Kasilof rivers did not always occur each year. These dip net fisheries were set to open when a specified sonar count was achieved. During years when the sonar count was not achieved, the dip net fishery scheduled for either the Kenai or Kasilof rivers did not occur.

Beginning with the 1996 season, the board established a season of July 10 - August 5 for the dip net fishery in the Kasilof River. The gillnet fishery began on June 21, with an established harvest cap of 5,000 to 10,000 fish and season closure by Emergency Order when the harvest was projected to achieve the upper limit. Establishing a season provided predictability to these fisheries.

During the February 1999 Board of Fisheries meeting, the board elected to provide for an increased harvest range in the Kasilof River set gillnet fishery of 10,000-20,000 fish and established the opening date of June 16th. The fishery remained open until closed by emergency order. Since the 2003 season, the fishery is open by regulation from June 15 through June 24. While the Kasilof River dip net fishery is open from June 25 through August 7.

The 1999-2003 average harvest of nearly 163,000 sockeye salmon in the Kenai River is nearly a seven-fold increase from the 1987-1995 average of slightly less than 23,000 fish. From 2004-2006 sockeye salmon harvest have averaged 228,652, 26,964 and 49,203 in the Kenai River dip net, Kasilof River set gillnet and Kasilof River dip net fisheries, respectively. Permit returns for the Cook Inlet personal use fisheries for the years 2004 - 2006 indicate that an average of 22% of permit holders attained the allowable permit limit. A larger percentage of households with 2 or less individuals attained the allowable permit limit (average=14%), compared to the percentage of household with more than 2 individuals (average=7%) from 2004 - 2006.

By regulation the Kasilof River personal use fisheries occur 24 hours per day. High sockeye passage rates and inriver returns projected to be greater than the upper goal range of the OEG warranted liberalization of the dip net fishery in 2004-2007 by emergency order. The liberalizations included an increase in the area open to dip netting from shore from the ADF&G markers located in Cook Inlet outside the river mouth upstream to the Sterling Highway Bridge. In addition, the area from which fish could be dip netted from a boat was increased from approximately river mile 1 to about river mile 3.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 217 - 5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Tom Obrien

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would reduce the personal use salmon fishery limit to 5 salmon per person or 25 per household.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Personal use salmon fisheries are open only to residents of the state. In Cook Inlet, only one personal use salmon permit may be issued to each household per year. The total annual limit for each personal use salmon fishing permit is 25 salmon for the head of a household and 10 salmon for each dependent of the permit holder.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would reduce harvest and effort by some unknown amount. The reduction in harvest potential for each participant would vary depending on the size of the household. For example, a family of 4 is currently allowed to harvest 55 salmon. A 4-person household would be allowed a maximum of 25 salmon for the household representing a potential harvest reduction of 55%. Meanwhile a permit holder would experience an 80%

reduction in harvest potential if the limit was decreased from 25 salmon to 5 salmon. Overall the larger the family, the greater the reduction, while the reduction for small families would be somewhat less.

BACKGROUND: The upper Cook Inlet personal use salmon fisheries are managed by the department under the terms of the Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan (5 AAC 77.540). This plan provides for a personal use salmon gillnet fishery at the mouth of Kasilof River and salmon dip net fisheries in the Kenai and Kasilof rivers and Fish Creek in northern Cook Inlet. This plan was in effect for the 1981 season and was later adopted as regulation by the board in 1982. The plan has undergone several amendments since that time.

Prior to 1996, the gillnet and dip net fisheries at both the Kenai and Kasilof rivers did not always occur each year. These dip net fisheries were set to open when a specified sonar count was achieved. During years when the sonar count was not achieved, the dip net fishery scheduled for either the Kenai or Kasilof rivers did not occur.

Beginning with the 1996 season, the board established a season of July 10 - August 5 (later amended to July 31) for the dip net fishery in the Kenai River. Establishing a season provided predictability to these fisheries. The household annual limit was 25 salmon for the head of the household and 10 additional salmon per member of the household of which only one king salmon could be retained per household. The regulations adopted by the board established a personal use dip net fishery that had season dates, which were independent of the abundance of returning salmon, and were not tied to the fisheries management plans for other user groups.

In 2002, the fishery was modified to manage the fishery more conservatively until inseason abundance information becomes available. The season dates remained unchanged but the daily hours was reduced to 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. until the department could project that the total Kenai River sockeye salmon late run would exceed 2.0 million fish. When the department could determine that the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon would exceed 2.0 million fish, the daily hours the Kenai River personal use dip net fishery could be liberalized to 24 hours per day until the season closed on July 31.

The Kenai River personal use dip net fishery was closed inseason by emergency order in 1998 due to a weak return of late-run sockeye salmon to the Kenai River and in 2006 due to a late return.. From 1999-2001 and 2007, the Kenai River personal use dip net fishery was not liberalized or restricted due to the average strengths of the sockeye salmon runs. The Kenai River personal use dip net fishery was liberalized annually during the 2002-2005 and 2007 seasons. The fishery was liberalized by increasing the daily hours the fishery is open and was the result of the sockeye salmon runs that were projected to be greater than 2.0 million fish during those years.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 218 - 5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Richard Thompson

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would reduce the personal use dip net annual limit from 25 salmon for the head of household to 20 salmon for the head of household and reduce the limit from 10 salmon to 5 salmon for each dependent member of the household. The proposal would also stipulate that no more than 50% of the personal use annual limit for each permit be taken from the Kenai River.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Personal use salmon fisheries are open only to residents of the state. In Cook Inlet, only one personal use salmon permit may be issued to each household per year. The total annual limit for each personal use salmon fishing permit is 25 salmon for the head of a household and 10 salmon for each dependent of the permit holder.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would reduce harvest and effort by some unknown amount. The reduction in harvest potential for each participant would vary depending on the size of the household. For example, a family of 4 is currently allowed to harvest 55 salmon. This proposal would reduce the limit to 35 or by about 36%. Overall the larger the family, the greater the reduction, while the reduction for small families would be somewhat less. Requiring a maximum of 50% of the annual household permit limit be taken from the Kenai River would reduce the harvest of salmon in the Kenai River personal use dip net fishery and increase the harvest and congestion in other personal use fisheries by undetermined amounts.

BACKGROUND: The upper Cook Inlet personal use salmon fisheries are managed by the department under the terms of the Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan (5 AAC 77.540). This plan provides for a personal use salmon gillnet fishery at the mouth of Kasilof River and salmon dip net fisheries in the Kenai and Kasilof rivers and Fish Creek in northern Cook Inlet. This plan was in effect for the 1981 season and was later adopted as regulation by the board in 1982. The plan has undergone several amendments since that time.

Prior to 1996, the gillnet and dip net fisheries at both the Kenai and Kasilof rivers did not always occur each year. These dip net fisheries were set to open when a specified sonar count was achieved. During years when the sonar count was not achieved, the dip net fishery scheduled for either the Kenai or Kasilof rivers did not occur.

Beginning with the 1996 season, the board established a season of July 10 - August 5 (later amended to July 31) for the dip net fishery in the Kenai River. Establishing a season provided predictability to these fisheries. The household annual limit was 25 salmon for the head of the household and 10 additional salmon per member of the household of which only one king salmon could be retained per household. The regulations adopted by the board established a personal use dip net fishery that had season dates, which were independent of the abundance of returning salmon, and were not tied to the fisheries management plans for other user groups.

In 2002, the fishery was modified to manage the fishery more conservatively until inseason abundance information becomes available. The season dates remained unchanged but the daily hours was reduced to 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. until the department could project that the total Kenai River sockeye salmon late run would exceed 2.0 million fish. When the department could determine that the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon would exceed 2.0 million fish, the daily hours the Kenai River personal use dip net fishery could be liberalized to 24 hours per day until the season closed on July 31.

The Kenai River personal use dip net fishery was closed inseason by emergency order in 1998 due to a weak return of late-run sockeye salmon to the Kenai River and in 2006 due to a late return.. From 1999-2001 and 2007, the Kenai River personal use dip net fishery was not liberalized or restricted due to the average strengths of the sockeye salmon runs. The Kenai River personal use dip net fishery was liberalized annually during the 2002-2005 and 2007 seasons. The fishery was liberalized by increasing the daily hours the fishery is open and was the result of the sockeye salmon runs that were projected to be greater than 2.0 million fish during those years.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 219 - 5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Richard Thompson

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would reduce the personal use salmon fishery limit to 5 salmon per person or 15 per household.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Personal use salmon fisheries are open only to residents of the state. In Cook Inlet, only one personal use salmon permit may be issued to each household per year. The total annual limit for each personal use

salmon fishing permit is 25 salmon for the head of a household and 10 salmon for each dependent of the permit holder.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would reduce harvest and effort by some unknown amount. The reduction in harvest potential for each participant would vary depending on the size of the household. For example, a 4-person household harvest potential would be reduced by 72% (from 55 salmon to 15 salmon). Overall the larger the family, the greater the reduction, while the reduction for small families would be somewhat less. Participation in the fishery would decline.

BACKGROUND: The upper Cook Inlet personal use salmon fisheries are managed by the department under the terms of the Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan (5 AAC 77.540). This plan provides for a personal use salmon gillnet fishery at the mouth of Kasilof River and salmon dip net fisheries in the Kenai and Kasilof rivers and Fish Creek in northern Cook Inlet. This plan was in effect for the 1981 season and was later adopted as regulation by the board in 1982. The plan has undergone several amendments since that time.

Prior to 1996, the gillnet and dip net fisheries at both the Kenai and Kasilof rivers did not always occur each year. These dip net fisheries were set to open when a specified sonar count was achieved. During years when the sonar count was not achieved, the dip net fishery scheduled for either the Kenai or Kasilof rivers did not occur.

Beginning with the 1996 season, the board established a season of July 10 - August 5 (later amended to July 31) for the dip net fishery in the Kenai River. Establishing a season provided predictability to these fisheries. The household annual limit was 25 salmon for the head of the household and 10 additional salmon per member of the household of which only one king salmon could be retained per household. The regulations adopted by the board established a personal use dip net fishery that had season dates, which were independent of the abundance of returning salmon, and were not tied to the fisheries management plans for other user groups.

In 2002, the fishery was modified to manage the fishery more conservatively until inseason abundance information becomes available. The season dates remained unchanged but the daily hours was reduced to 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. until the department could project that the total Kenai River sockeye salmon late run would exceed 2.0 million fish. When the department could determine that the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon would exceed 2.0 million fish, the daily hours the Kenai River personal use dip net fishery could be liberalized to 24 hours per day until the season closed on July 31.

The Kenai River personal use dip net fishery was closed inseason by emergency order in 1998 due to a weak return of late-run sockeye salmon to the Kenai River and in 2006 due to a late return.. From 1999-2001 and 2007, the Kenai River personal use dip net fishery was not liberalized or restricted due to the average strengths of the sockeye salmon runs.

The Kenai River personal use dip net fishery was liberalized annually during the 2002-2005 and 2007 seasons. The fishery was liberalized by increasing the daily hours the fishery is open and was the result of the sockeye salmon runs that were projected to be greater than 2.0 million fish during those years.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 220 - 5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Steve Vanek

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Establish a maximum mesh size of 2.5-inches for dip nets in the personal use fisheries in Cook Inlet.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Dip nets are legal gear as defined under the statewide general provisions of 5 AAC 39.105 (d) (24). TYPES OF LEGAL GEAR. A dip net is a bag-shaped net supported on all sides by a rigid frame; the maximum straight-line distance between any two points on the net frame, as measured through the net opening, may not exceed five feet; the depth of the bag must be at least one-half of the greatest straight-line distance, as measured through the net opening; no portion of the bag may be constructed of webbing that exceeds a stretched measurement of 4.5 inches; the frame must be attached to a single rigid handle and be operated by hand.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? A reduction in mesh size from the current 4.5 inches may result in fewer sockeye salmon harvested in the personal use dipnet fisheries. The elimination of gillnet material from dip nets could reduce the overall harvest efficiency of individual fishermen and there may be some unknown decline in harvest. Personal use fishermen may require more time to obtain the same amount of fish they desire to harvest.

BACKGROUND: Prior to 1988, there were no restrictions regarding mesh size that could be used in a dip net. In 1988, the board adopted the current statewide regulation limiting mesh size to a maximum of 4.5 inches. This regulation was in response to staff and public observation indicating more fish were “gilled” than “dipped” when larger mesh was used. At that time, the board agreed that smaller mesh should be used to ensure that the fish were dipped. There is no restriction on the material that can be used to form the dip net bag.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. Decreased harvest is an allocative issue rather than a biological issue. The regulation which stipulates the maximum mesh size allowed for use with a 'dip net" is a statewide provision under 5 AAC 39.105 and would need to be addressed statewide in order to ensure regulatory consistency. A uniform statewide standard is easier to enforce. Alaska Wildlife Troopers reports that abuse of net size is minimal and only a few cases of gear violations have been cited in the personal use fisheries in recent years.

COST ANALYSIS: The department believes that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery. Persons participating in this fishery would be required to change the type of webbing of their dip nets to meet new regulation specifications if the current webbing does not meet the newly adopted requirements.

PROPOSAL 221 - 5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would prohibit dip netting from a vessel not equipped with a four-stroke or Direct Fuel Injection (DFI) two-stroke motor in the Kenai River personal use dip net fishery starting in the year 2010.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? There are no restrictions on boat engine type in the Kenai River personal use dip net fishery. Personal use salmon fisheries are open only to residents of the state. In the Kenai River salmon may be taken by dip net from July 10 through July 31, seven days per week, from 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. Salmon may be taken by boat, in the area from an ADF&G regulatory marker located near the Kenai city dock upstream to the downstream side of the Warren Ames Bridge. The commissioner may extend, by emergency order, the personal use fishery to 24-hours per day if the department determines that the abundance of the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon is greater than two million.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? A major source of hydrocarbon pollution in the lower Kenai River would be eliminated by 2010 resulting in an undetermined decline in hydrocarbon levels in the lower Kenai River. It would provide a phase-out period for two-stroke motors and allow two-stroke outboard owners a two year period to participate fully in the fishery without restriction before compliance would become mandatory. This proposal may prevent or limit some individuals from participating in the personal use dip net fishery if they do not have a vessel equipped with a four-stroke or DFI two-stroke motor. In addition, it may increase congestion in the shore-based fishery by some unknown amount.

BACKGROUND: In 1984, legislation created the Kenai River Special Management Area (KRSMA) with management assigned to the Department of Natural Resources, Division

of Parks and Outdoor Recreation (DPOR). The KRSMA includes Kenai and Skilak Lakes and the entire river system downstream to river mile 4, near the Warren Ames Bridge. The personal use fishery operates in waters outside of the KRSMA and is not subject to DNR regulations.

The upper Cook Inlet personal use salmon fisheries are managed by the department under the terms of the Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan (5 AAC 77.540). Those harvesting salmon by boat in the personal use fishery are not restricted with regard to outboard motor.

Data collected from 2000-2006 indicates that the State Water Quality Standards of 10 parts per billion total aqueous hydrocarbons were consistently exceeded each summer with a direct correlation between the levels of hydrocarbons and the number of motorized vessels, especially when two-stroke motors constitute a large percentage of the vessels. In 2006, the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) listed the lower 19 miles of the Kenai River as a Category 5 impaired waterbody for petroleum hydrocarbon pollution exceeding state water quality standards.

ADF&G, DEC, & DNR have been working together to put controls in place that will bring the waterbody back into compliance with state water quality standards. DNR has proposed to adopt regulation changes in Title 11 of the Alaska Administrative Code dealing with boat and motor restrictions in the KRSMA. The proposed regulations are planned to take effect beginning in 2008, requiring all power boats operating in the KRSMA during July to use either four-stroke or DFI two-stroke motors. Also proposed is beginning January 1, 2010 all power boats operating in the KRSMA must have either four-stroke or DFI two-stroke motors year round.

This action by DNR would still leave the area of the personal use dip net fishery susceptible to exceeding state water quality standards and possibly preventing a delisting from the impaired waterbody list.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department submitted and **SUPPORTS** this proposal. However, the department recommends that this proposal be modified to begin when the changes to the DNR regulations are implemented. A coordinated effort will better enable DEC to measure and report changes to hydrocarbon levels within their waterbody recovery plan. It targets hydrocarbon emissions from vessels operating in the personal use dip net fishery on the lower Kenai River during July. Although the contribution of hydrocarbon pollution by the dip net fishery is undetermined, this measure is consistent with an element of the board adopted policy for the management of sustainable salmon fisheries that salmon habitat in fresh water should be protected on a watershed basis including appropriate management of water quality.

COST ANALYSIS: The department believes that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 222 - 5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai Area Fisherman's Coalition

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would prohibit 2-stroke outboard motors operating in the Kenai River personal use dip net fishery each day based upon the vessel registration number issued by the Alaska Division of Motor Vehicles. Specifically, 2-stroke powered vessels with an odd numbered registration number would be allowed in the fishery only on odd numbered days and 2-stroke powered vessels with an even numbered registration number would only be allowed in the fishery on even numbered days.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? There are no restrictions on boat engine type in the Kenai River personal use dip net fishery. Personal use salmon fisheries are open only to residents of the state. In the Kenai River salmon may be taken by dip net from July 10 through July 31, seven days per week, from 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. Salmon may be taken by boat, in the area from an ADF&G regulatory marker located near the Kenai city dock upstream to the downstream side of the Warren Ames Bridge. The commissioner may extend, by emergency order, the personal use fishery to 24-hours per day if the department determines that the abundance of the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon is greater than two million.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal may reduce the number of two-stroke motors operating in the fishery each day by an undetermined number, while over the long-term it may not reduce the level of hydrocarbons sufficiently to meet federal water quality standards. This proposal may reduce participation in the fishery and increase congestion in the shore-based fishery by some unknown amount. For participants who use vessels powered by two-stroke motors, this proposal would reduce opportunity by 50%.

BACKGROUND: In 1984, legislation created the Kenai River Special Management Area (KRSMA) with management assigned to the Department of Natural Resources, Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation (DPOR). The KRSMA includes Kenai and Skilak Lakes and the entire river system downstream to river mile 4, near the Warren Ames Bridge. The personal use fishery operates in waters outside of the KRSMA and is not subject to DNR regulations.

The upper Cook Inlet personal use salmon fisheries are managed by the department under the terms of the Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan (5 AAC 77.540). Those harvesting salmon by boat in the personal use fishery are not restricted with regard to outboard motor.

Data collected from 2000-2006 indicates that the State Water Quality Standards of 10 parts per billion total aqueous hydrocarbons were consistently exceeded each summer with a direct correlation between the levels of hydrocarbons and the number of motorized vessels, especially when two-stroke motors constitute a large percentage of the vessels. In

2006, the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) listed the lower 19 miles of the Kenai River as a Category 5 impaired waterbody for petroleum hydrocarbon pollution exceeding state water quality standards.

ADF&G, DEC, & DNR have been working together to put controls in place that will bring the waterbody back into compliance with state water quality standards. DNR has proposed to adopt regulation changes in Title 11 of the Alaska Administrative Code dealing with boat and motor restrictions in the KRSMA. The proposed regulations are planned to take effect beginning in 2008, requiring all power boats operating in the KRSMA during July to use either four-stroke or DFI two-stroke motors. Also proposed is beginning January 1, 2010 all power boats operating in the KRSMA must have either four-stroke or DFI two-stroke motors year round.

This action by DNR would still leave the area of the personal use dip net fishery susceptible to exceeding state water quality standards and possibly preventing a delisting from the impaired waterbody list.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. The department is supportive of taking action to reduce hydrocarbon contributions from vessels operating in the personal use dip net fishery on the lower Kenai River during July. However, this proposal still allows a source of hydrocarbon pollution to persist in the lower Kenai River during July.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 223 - 5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai Area Fisherman's Coalition

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Require vessels powered by a motor operating in the Kenai River personal use dip net fishery to be anchored or without power while fishing or alternatively restrict 2-stroke powered vessels to be on anchor in a restricted sub-area within the area of the lower Kenai River open to personal use dip net fishing from a boat.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? There are no restrictions on boat engine type in the Kenai River personal use dip net fishery. Personal use salmon fisheries are open only to residents of the state. In the Kenai River salmon may be taken by dip net from July 10 through July 31, seven days per week, from 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. Salmon may be taken by boat, in the area from an ADF&G regulatory marker located near the Kenai city dock upstream to the downstream side of the Warren Ames Bridge. The commissioner may extend, by emergency order, the personal use fishery to

24-hours per day if the department determines that the abundance of the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon is greater than two million.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Boats operating in the dip net fishery would be either on anchor or drifting with: 1) the wind, 2) downriver current or 3) upriver tidal current while dip nets are deployed into the water. This would reduce the overall harvest efficiency of individual fishermen and there may be some unknown decline in harvest. Enforcement as well as the public's interpretation of regulations would become considerably more complex. Navigation would become problematic or perhaps hazardous due to the combination of anchored and drifting vessels fishing among vessels traveling under power in a relatively small section the lower Kenai River.

BACKGROUND: In 1984, legislation created the Kenai River Special Management Area (KRSMA) with management assigned to the Department of Natural Resources, Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation (DPOR). The KRSMA includes Kenai and Skilak Lakes and the entire river system downstream to river mile 4, near the Warren Ames Bridge. The personal use fishery operates in waters outside of the KRSMA and is not subject to DNR regulations.

The upper Cook Inlet personal use salmon fisheries are managed by the department under the terms of the Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan (5 AAC 77.540). Those harvesting salmon by boat in the personal use fishery are not restricted with regard to outboard motor.

Data collected from 2000-2006 indicates that the State Water Quality Standards of 10 parts per billion total aqueous hydrocarbons were consistently exceeded each summer with a direct correlation between the levels of hydrocarbons and the number of motorized vessels, especially when two-stroke motors constitute a large percentage of the vessels. In 2006, the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) listed the lower 19 miles of the Kenai River as a Category 5 impaired waterbody for petroleum hydrocarbon pollution exceeding state water quality standards.

ADF&G, DEC, & DNR have been working together to put controls in place that will bring the waterbody back into compliance with state water quality standards. DNR has proposed to adopt regulation changes in Title 11 of the Alaska Administrative Code dealing with boat and motor restrictions in the KRSMA. The proposed regulations are planned to take effect beginning in 2008, requiring all power boats operating in the KRSMA during July to use either four-stroke or DFI two-stroke motors. Also proposed is beginning January 1, 2010 all power boats operating in the KRSMA must have either four-stroke or DFI two-stroke motors year round.

This action by DNR would still leave the area of the personal use dip net fishery susceptible to exceeding state water quality standards and possibly preventing a delisting from the impaired waterbody list.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. The department is supportive of taking action to reduce hydrocarbon contributions from vessels operating in the personal use dip net fishery on the lower Kenai River during July. However, it is unclear whether or not the aim of the proposal is to reduce a source of hydrocarbon pollution in the lower Kenai River or to change boat dip netting fishing methods. If this proposal is to make the fishery less efficient, then the department is **NEUTRAL** on the allocative aspect of the proposal. Decreased harvest in the personal use fishery is an allocative issue rather than a biological issue.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 224 - 5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Bruce Knowles

WHAT WOULD THIS PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow the use of a rod and reel to harvest salmon in the Cook Inlet personal use salmon fisheries and would identify consumptive users as a person fishing for winter food supply.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Upper Cook Inlet personal use salmon fishery management plan allows for the use of set nets or dipnets. The use of a fishing rod and fishing reel in the Upper Cook Inlet personal use salmon fisheries is not allowed. Statewide provisions do not allow the use of a fishing rod and fishing reel as a legal gear type harvesting fish in a personal use salmon fishery.

WHAT WOULD THE EFFECT BE IF THIS PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This would cause gear conflicts between personal use fishermen using dipnets or set nets and those using a fishing rod while attempting to harvest fish in the same area. The overall harvest efficiency of individual fishermen would decrease with the change in gear-types and there may be some unknown decline in the total harvest in the personal use salmon fisheries if current participants switch from using dipnets and setnets to a rod and reel. Enforcement of regulations will also become more complicated with the introduction of a new gear-type to the personal use fisheries. It is uncertain what affect, if any, identifying consumptive users would have on the fishery.

BACKGROUND: Open seasons, bag limits, types of legal gear and areas open to fishing are addressed within the regulatory framework established by the Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan. Currently, there are three locations in Upper Cook Inlet that are open to personal use fishing with either a set gillnet or a dipnet. Those areas are the Kasilof and Kenai rivers on the Kenai Peninsula and Fish Creek in the Matanuska-Susitna borough. The designated areas that are open to personal use fishing in these three locations are all within the terminus areas of the specific river mouth and Cook Inlet. Legal fishing gear is restricted to a dipnet in the Kenai River and

Fish Creek fisheries and either a set-gillnet or a dipnet in the Kasilof River, depending on the season.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. Introducing a less efficient gear type into a fishery designed for greater harvest efficiency will compromise the intent of the fishery and the public's recognition of the purpose of a personal use fishery. The introduction of a gear type that will conflict with the existing harvest methods is not supported by ADF&G. The areas in which personal use salmon fisheries occur in Upper Cook Inlet are generally not conducive to harvest of sockeye salmon with a fishing rod and reel. The department is uncertain what the proposer is seeking regarding identifying consumptive users as a person fishing for winter food supply.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

KENAI RIVER RESIDENT SPECIES

PROPOSAL 236 - 5 AAC 57.120(6). General provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Spencer Devito

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would increase the rainbow/steelhead trout bag and possession limit in unstocked lakes within the Kenai River drainage, except Kenai and Skilak lakes, from two to per day to five per day, with only one fish 20 inches or greater in length.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Rainbow/steelhead trout are subject to an annual limit of two fish 20 inches or greater in length, and a harvest record is required. Rainbow/steelhead tout may be taken from January 1- December 31, in lakes and ponds, including Kenai Lake and tributary lakes of Kenai Lake, except Skilak Lake and stocked lakes; bag and possession limit of two fish, of which only one may be 20 inches or greater in length;

Rainbow/steelhead tout may be taken from January 1 – December 31, in stocked lakes and ponds of the Kenai River and Kenai Lake drainage; bag and possession limit of five fish, of which only one may be 20 inches or greater in length. These stocked lakes and ponds include Aurora Lake, Barbara Lake, Cabin Lake, Carter Lake, Cecille Lake, Chugach Estates Lake, Douglas Lake, Elephant Lake, Island Lake, Longmere Lake, Loon Lake, Rainbow Lake, Scout Lake, Sport Lake, Thetis Lake, Tirmore Lake, and Vagt Lake.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal may increase the effort and harvest of wild rainbow trout in unstocked lakes within the Kenai River drainage by an unknown amount. It would also deviate from the standards set in the Statewide Management Standards for Wild Trout.

BACKGROUND: Past regulations governing the harvest of rainbow trout in the Kenai River drainage were liberal and became progressively conservative as well as complex as the fishery grew in popularity. Prior to 2005, the bag and possession limit for rainbow/steelhead trout in unstocked lakes was 2 per day from April 15-October 31, and 5 per day from November 1 – April 14. Currently, Kenai River drainage native rainbow trout are conservatively managed under the framework of the board adopted statewide management standards for wild trout. This policy established in 2003 was developed by the board and the department along with stakeholders and implemented throughout the state since its adoption. The policy has standardized the regulations for optimal sustained yield of wild trout stocks for waters in areas for which the board has not established a regional trout management plan and adopted provisions of the plan as regulations. Specifically, conservative management for wild rainbow trout means a bag and possession limit of two fish, of which only one may be 20 inches or greater in length, with an annual limit of two fish 20 inches or greater in length. During the 2005 Upper Cook Inlet board of fisheries meeting several proposals related to the Kenai River drainage rainbow trout were taken under advisement. Considerations were to reconcile complex regulations for this fishery and to provide a diversity of fishing opportunity that the department believed would be commensurate with the productive capability of the native rainbow trout population. Consequently, the board adopted the statewide standards for lakes of the Kenai River Drainage.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. The current regulations for Kenai River drainage rainbow trout provide harvest opportunity, regulatory consistency and a fishery thought to be sustainable given the current level of participation. Twenty-seven Kenai Peninsula lakes are stocked with rainbow trout and other lakes and ponds supporting rainbow trout that are not in the Kenai River Drainage provide additional harvest opportunity under a bag limit of 5 fish per day.

COST ANALYSIS:
The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 237 - 5 AAC 57.120(6). General provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Dick Dykema

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would increase the rainbow/steelhead trout bag and possession limit in all lakes within the Kenai River

drainage from two to per day to five per day, with only one fish 20 inches or greater in length.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Rainbow/steelhead trout are subject to an annual limit of two fish 20 inches or greater in length, and a harvest record is required. Rainbow/steelhead tout may be taken from January 1- December 31, in lakes and ponds, including Kenai Lake and tributary lakes of Kenai Lake, except Skilak Lake and stocked lakes; bag and possession limit of two fish, of which only one may be 20 inches or greater in length;

Rainbow/steelhead tout may be taken from January 1 – December 31, in stocked lakes and ponds of the Kenai River and Kenai Lake drainage; bag and possession limit of five fish, of which only one may be 20 inches or greater in length. These stocked lakes and ponds include Aurora Lake, Barbara Lake, Cabin Lake, Carter Lake, Cecille Lake, Chugach Estates Lake, Douglas Lake, Elephant Lake, Island Lake, Longmere Lake, Loon Lake, Rainbow Lake, Scout Lake, Sport Lake, Thetis Lake, Tirmore Lake, and Vagt Lake.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal may increase in the effort and harvest of wild rainbow trout in unstocked lakes within the Kenai River drainage by an unknown amount. It would also deviate from the standards set in the Statewide Management Standards for Wild Trout.

BACKGROUND: Historically board adopted regulations governing the harvest of rainbow trout in the Kenai River drainage were liberal and became progressively conservative as well as complex as the rainbow trout fishery grew in popularity. Currently native Kenai River drainage rainbow trout are conservatively managed under the framework of the board adopted statewide management standards for wild trout. This plan established in 2003 was developed by the department along with stakeholders and has been implemented in various areas throughout the state over the past several years. Its use has standardized the management regulations for the optimal sustained yield of wild trout stocks for waters in areas for which the board has not established a regional trout management plan and adopted provisions of the plan as regulations. Specifically, conservative management for wild rainbow trout means a bag and possession limit of two fish, of which only one may be 20 inches or greater in length, with an annual limit of two fish 20 inches or greater in length. During the 2005 Upper Cook Inlet board of fisheries meeting several proposals related to the Kenai River drainage rainbow trout were taken under advisement. Considerations were to reconcile complex regulations for this fishery and to provide a diversity of fishing opportunity that the department believed would be commensurate with the productive capability of the native rainbow trout population. Consequently, the board adopted the statewide standards for lakes of the Kenai River Drainage.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. The current regulations for Kenai River drainage rainbow trout provide harvest opportunity, regulatory consistency and a fishery thought to be sustainable given the current level of

participation. Twenty-seven Kenai Peninsula lakes are stocked with rainbow trout and other lakes and ponds supporting rainbow trout that are not in the Kenai River Drainage provide additional harvest opportunity under a bag limit of 5 fish per day.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 238 - 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai River Professional Guides Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would close a portion of the Kenai River between the outlet of Skilak Lake and the Upper Killey River to fishing for Dolly Varden from April 15 – June 11.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Arctic char/Dolly Varden may be taken from; January 1 – December 31, in all flowing waters from the mouth of the Kenai River upstream to Skilak Lake, and the waters of Skilak Lake, except the waters within a one-half mile radius of the Kenai River inlet; bag and possession limit of one fish less than 18 inches in length; Arctic char/Dolly Varden 18 inches or greater in length may not be retained; Arctic char/Dolly Varden caught that are 18 inches or greater in length must be released immediately.

Rainbow/steelhead trout may be taken from June 11- May 1, in all flowing waters from the mouth of the Kenai River upstream to Skilak Lake, and the waters of Skilak Lake, except the water within a one-half mile radius of the Kenai River inlet; bag and possession limit of one fish less than 18 inches in length; rainbow/steelhead trout 18 inches or greater in length may not be retained; rainbow trout/steelhead trout caught that are 18 inches or greater in length must be released immediately

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would decrease fishing opportunity for Dolly Varden and may result in a decrease in harvest. Incidental catch and release of rainbow trout during the closed season for rainbow trout would decrease. Catch and release mortality, whether or not substantial, for both species during April 15 – June 11 would decrease by an unknown amount. Fishing effort may increase in lakes and ponds of the Kenai Peninsula Area where Dolly Varden and rainbow trout fishing is open the entire year. Enforcement of rainbow trout spawning season closure would be obtainable.

BACKGROUND: Historically a spring spawning closure prohibiting rainbow trout fishing in sections of the Kenai River has been used as part of the regulatory framework to manage this fishery. The spring spawning closure has gone through several phases. From 1959-1964 the closure was from April 1 - late May. Fishing was allowed during

the spring season from 1965 - 1981. Beginning in 1982, the spring spawning closure was reinstituted from January 1 - June 14. The closure was extended to November 1 - June 14 during 1984-1988. In 1997 the fishery was liberalized again resulting in a rainbow trout season in all flowing waters of the Kenai River drainage below the Killey River from June 15 - April 14.

The current regulations were adopted in 2005 as a result of considering several proposals related to the Kenai River rainbow trout and Dolly Varden fisheries. The new regulations resulted in a net gain in fishing time and area, allowed harvest opportunity, and a more consistent regulatory framework for both species throughout the drainage. However while closed to rainbow trout fishing from May 2 – June 10 the area from the mouth of the Kenai River upstream to Skilak Lake remained open to fishing for Dolly Varden.

When fishing for Dolly Varden, anglers use a terminal gear configuration (line weight, hook and fly size) similar to that used to fish for rainbow trout. Consequently, anglers may fish for rainbow trout in waters closed to rainbow trout fishing under the guise of fishing for Dolly Varden. Since anglers use similar terminal gear for Dolly Varden and for rainbow trout and no rainbow trout are harvested, law enforcement has no probable cause recourse for enforcing the rainbow trout fishing closure. In spring, from Skilak Lake downstream for several river miles spawning aggregations of rainbow trout are easily identified and are vulnerable to fishing during the May 2 – June 10 spawning closure.

Participation in this fishery raised the public awareness of the management of Kenai River rainbow trout. This awareness has resulted in two divergent perspectives. The first, supports protection of rainbow trout during the spawning period in spring, thus seeks to close the area to Dolly Varden fishing. The second perspective advocates for fishing opportunity and regards the spring spawning closure as unnecessary. In lieu of these perspectives the department was concerned about the efficacy of the regulation adopted in 2005 as well as the effect of catch and release fishing pressure on spring aggregations of rainbow trout. Due to these factors the department issued an emergency order prohibiting anglers from removing rainbow trout caught during the closure from the water prior to releasing them. This adjustment was intended to assuage concerns by some stakeholders regarding conservation of rainbow trout. This was done in recognition of the long-standing history of public and departmental support of a rainbow trout fishing season closure during the spring on the Kenai River.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** this proposal with modifications to extend the area of closure to fishing for Dolly Varden and rainbow trout from the Moose River upstream to the waters of Skilak Lake within one-half mile radius of the Kenai River inlet at Skilak Lake from May 2 through June 10. This change would align the rainbow trout and Dolly Varden fishing seasons in the waters below Skilak Lake to the Moose River with the fishing season above Skilak Lake. The principal regulatory measures to meet the management objective of a sustainable wild rainbow trout fishery in the Kenai River are the spring closure and maximum size limit regulations. The spawning closure is consistent with the board adopted policy for the management of

sustainable wild trout fisheries as it protects wild trout stocks within the trout's spawning habitats. This regulation would also serve to discourage illegal fishing activities.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 239 - 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Andy Szczesny

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would liberalize the rainbow trout fishing season in the Kenai River drainage by shortening the spring rainbow trout fishing closure by 14 days, (from May 2 - June 10, to May 15 to June 10).

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Rainbow/steelhead trout may be taken from June 11- May 1, in all flowing waters from the mouth of the Kenai River upstream to Skilak Lake, and the waters of Skilak Lake, except the water within a one-half mile radius of the Kenai River inlet; bag and possession limit of one fish less than 18 inches in length; rainbow/steelhead trout 18 inches or greater in length may not be retained; rainbow trout/steelhead trout caught that are 18 inches or greater in length must be released immediately.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would increase fishing opportunity for rainbow/steelhead trout and may result in an increase in the effort and harvest by an unknown amount. Catch and release mortality, whether or not substantial, would increase.

BACKGROUND: Historically a spring spawning closure prohibiting rainbow trout fishing in sections of the Kenai River has been used as part of the regulatory framework to manage this fishery. The spring spawning closure has gone through several phases. From 1959-1964 the closure was from April 1 - late May. Fishing was allowed during the spring season from 1965 - 1981. Beginning in 1982, the spring spawning closure was reinstituted from January 1 - June 14. The closure was extended to November 1 - June 14 during 1984-1988. In 1997 the fishery was liberalized again resulting in a rainbow trout season in all flowing waters of the Kenai River drainage below the Killey River from June 15 - April 14.

The current regulations were adopted in 2005 as a result of considering several proposals related to the Kenai River rainbow trout and Dolly Varden fisheries. The new regulations resulted in a net gain in fishing time and area, allowed harvest opportunity, and a more consistent regulatory framework for both species throughout the drainage. However while closed to rainbow trout fishing from May 2 – June 10 the area from the mouth of the Kenai River upstream to Skilak Lake remained open to fishing for Dolly Varden.

The current regulations were adopted in 2005 as a result of considering several proposals related to the Kenai River rainbow trout and Dolly Varden fisheries. The new regulations resulted in a net gain in fishing time and area, allowed harvest opportunity and a more consistent regulatory framework for both species throughout the drainage. Maturity samples collected from Kenai River rainbow trout during the spring from 1998-2002 were used to develop the spawning season closure dates. As indicated by the numbers of spawning rainbow trout in the samples collected across all years, spawning occurred from late in April, through mid-June. Specifically, the number of both spawning and post-spawning rainbow trout detected in samples increased markedly throughout May, with spawning fish detected in samples through mid-June.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. The current regulations for Kenai River drainage rainbow trout provide harvest opportunity, regulatory consistency and a fishery thought to be sustainable given the current level of participation.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 240 - 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Ted Wellman

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would prohibit sport fishing in the Kenai River from the outlet of Skilak Lake downstream to the Upper Killey River from May 2 to June 10.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The flowing waters of the Kenai River from its mouth upstream to the outlet of Skilak Lake are open to king salmon fishing from January 1 – July 31; sockeye, pink, and chum salmon may be taken from January 1 – December 31; coho salmon may be taken only from July 1 – October 31; Arctic char/Dolly Varden may be taken from; January 1 – December 31; rainbow/steelhead trout may be taken from June 11- May 1.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would decrease fishing opportunity for Dolly Varden and may result in a decrease in harvest. Incidental catch and release of rainbow trout during the closed season for rainbow trout would decrease. Catch and release mortality, whether or not substantial, for both species during May 2 - June 10 would decrease by an unknown amount. King salmon fishing opportunity and harvest may decrease by a small amount as would sockeye salmon fishing. Fishing for the other species would not be impacted since they are not present. Fishing effort may increase in lakes and ponds of the Kenai Peninsula

Area where Dolly Varden and rainbow trout fishing in open the entire year. Enforcement of rainbow trout spring season closure would be obtainable.

BACKGROUND: Historically a spring spawning closure prohibiting rainbow trout fishing in sections of the Kenai River has been used as part of the regulatory framework to manage this fishery. The spring spawning closure has gone through several phases. From 1959-1964 the closure was from April 1 - late May. Fishing was allowed during the spring season from 1965 - 1981. Beginning in 1982, the spring spawning closure was reinstituted from January 1 - June 14. The closure was extended to November 1 - June 14 during 1984-1988. In 1997 the fishery was liberalized again resulting in a rainbow trout season in all flowing waters of the Kenai River drainage below the Killey River from June 15 - April 14.

The current regulations were adopted in 2005 as a result of considering several proposals related to the Kenai River rainbow trout and Dolly Varden fisheries. The new regulations resulted in a net gain in fishing time and area, allowed harvest opportunity, and a more consistent regulatory framework for both species throughout the drainage. However while closed to rainbow trout fishing from May 2 – June 10 the area from the mouth of the Kenai River upstream to Skilak Lake remained open to fishing for Dolly Varden to provide harvest opportunity.

When fishing for Dolly Varden, anglers use a terminal gear configuration (line weight, hook and fly size) similar to that used to fish for rainbow trout. Consequently, anglers may fish for rainbow trout in waters closed to rainbow trout fishing under the false pretext of fishing for Dolly Varden. Since anglers use similar terminal gear for Dolly Varden and for rainbow trout and no rainbow trout are harvested, law enforcement has no probable cause recourse for enforcing the rainbow trout fishing closure. In spring, from Skilak Lake downstream for several river miles spawning aggregations of rainbow trout are easily identified and are vulnerable to fishing during the May 2 – June 10 closure.

Participation in this fishery raised the public awareness of the management of Kenai River rainbow trout. This awareness has resulted in two divergent perspectives. The first, supports protection of rainbow trout during the spawning period in spring, thus seeks to close the area to Dolly Varden fishing. The second perspective advocates for fishing opportunity and regards the spring closure as unnecessary. In lieu of these perspectives the department was concerned about the efficacy of the regulation adopted in 2005 as well as the effect of catch and release fishing pressure on spring aggregations of rainbow trout. Due to these factors the department issued an emergency order prohibiting anglers from removing rainbow trout caught during the closure from the water prior to releasing them. This adjustment was intended to assuage concerns by some stakeholders regarding conservation of rainbow trout. This was done in recognition of the long-standing history of public and departmental support of a rainbow trout fishing spawning season closure during the spring on the Kenai River.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. Closing this area to all sport fishing unnecessarily restricts fishing opportunity on salmon species. The

department does support aligning the Arctic Char/Dolly Varden and rainbow/steelhead trout seasons as described in our comments under proposal 238.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 241 - 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would prohibit the removal of rainbow trout from the water during the spring rainbow trout fishing closure on the Kenai River from May 2 to June 10.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Rainbow/steelhead trout may be taken from June 11- May 1, in all flowing water of the Kenai River drainage. There are no regulations in the Kenai River drainage that prohibit removing rainbow trout from the water that are intended to be released.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Prohibiting anglers from removing rainbow/steelhead trout from the water during the May 2 – June 10 spawning closure may reduce mortality of incidentally-caught trout during the time when the spawning trout may be more susceptible to handling mortality. It may also deter some anglers from fishing or fishing illegally for rainbow trout during the spring closure as they would not be able to remove the rainbow trout from the water to photograph it.

BACKGROUND: Historically a spring spawning closure prohibiting rainbow trout fishing in sections of the Kenai River has been used as part of the regulatory framework to manage this fishery. The spring spawning closure has gone through several phases. From 1959-1964 the closure was from April 1 - late May. Fishing was allowed during the spring season from 1965 - 1981. Beginning in 1982, the spring spawning closure was reinstituted from January 1 - June 14. The closure was extended to November 1 - June 14 during 1984-1988. In 1997 the fishery was liberalized again resulting in a rainbow trout season in all flowing waters of the Kenai River drainage below the Killey River from June 15 - April 14.

The current regulations were adopted in 2005 as a result of considering several proposals related to the Kenai River rainbow trout and Dolly Varden fisheries. The new regulations resulted in a net gain in fishing time and area, allowed harvest opportunity, and a more consistent regulatory framework for both species throughout the drainage. However while closed to rainbow trout fishing from May 2 – June 10 the area from the mouth of the Kenai River upstream to Skilak Lake remained open to fishing for Dolly Varden to provide harvest opportunity.

When fishing for Dolly Varden, anglers use a terminal gear configuration (line weight, hook and fly size) similar to that used to fish for rainbow trout. Consequently, anglers may fish for rainbow trout in waters closed to rainbow trout fishing under the false pretext of fishing for Dolly Varden. Since anglers use similar terminal gear for Dolly Varden and for rainbow trout and no rainbow trout are harvested, law enforcement has no probable cause recourse for enforcing the rainbow trout fishing closure. In spring, from Skilak Lake downstream for several river miles spawning aggregations of rainbow trout are easily identified and are vulnerable to fishing during the May 2 – June 10 closure.

Participation in this fishery raised the public awareness of the management of Kenai River rainbow trout. This awareness has resulted in two divergent perspectives. The first, supports protection of rainbow trout during the spawning period in spring, thus seeks to close the area to Dolly Varden fishing. The second perspective advocates for fishing opportunity and regards the spring closure as unnecessary. In lieu of these perspectives the department was concerned about the efficacy of the regulation adopted in 2005 as well as the effect of catch and release fishing pressure on spring aggregations of rainbow trout. Due to these factors the department issued an emergency order prohibiting anglers from removing rainbow trout caught during the closure from the water prior to releasing them. This adjustment was intended to assuage concerns by some stakeholders regarding conservation of rainbow trout. This was done in recognition of the long-standing history of public and departmental support of a rainbow trout fishing season closure during the spring on the Kenai River.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department submitted and **SUPPORTS** this proposal. The department recognizes that a consistent spring closure to rainbow trout fishing throughout the drainage would make this regulation unnecessary. A resolution to the issue of rainbow trout fishing during the spring spawning closure is to extend the area of closure to fishing for Dolly Varden and rainbow trout from the Moose River upstream to the waters of Skilak Lake within one-half mile radius of the Kenai River inlet at Skilak Lake from May 2 through June 10. This change would align the rainbow trout and Dolly Varden fishing seasons in the waters below Skilak Lake to the Moose River with the fishing season above Skilak Lake. The principal regulatory measures to meet the management objective of a sustainable wild rainbow trout fishery in the Kenai River are the spring closure and maximum size limit regulations. The spawning closure is consistent with the board adopted policy for the management of sustainable wild trout fisheries as it protects wild trout stocks within the trout's spawning habitats. This would also serve to discourage illegal fishing activities

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 242 - 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Cooper Landing Fish and Game Advisory Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would prohibit removing rainbow trout or Dolly Varden from the waters of the Kenai River drainage if they are intended to be released.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? There are no regulations in the Kenai River drainage that prohibit removing rainbow trout and Dolly Varden from water that are intended to be released.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Prohibiting anglers from removing rainbow/steelhead trout from the water during the May 2 – June 10 spawning closure may reduce mortality of incidentally-caught trout during the time when the spawning trout may be more susceptible to handling mortality. It could possibly disenfranchise anglers who photograph these species prior to releasing them back into the water.

BACKGROUND: Fishing for rainbow trout and Dolly Varden in the Kenai River is very popular. Historically board adopted regulations governing the harvest of rainbow trout in the Kenai River drainage were liberal and became progressively conservative as well as complex as the rainbow trout fishery grew in popularity. Currently native Kenai River rainbow trout and Dolly Varden are conservatively managed.

Angler participation in rainbow trout fishing measured by catch of rainbow trout in the Kenai River has increased greatly since 1990. Catch averaged 28,787 rainbow from 1984 - 1994 and increased to an average of about 101,000 from 1995 - 2005. The reported catch for 2006 the most recent year available was 131,819 rainbow trout. Similar catch trends in the Dolly Varden fishery are also evident as catch averaged 72,439 fish from 1990 - 2000 and increased to an average of 110,778 Dolly Varden from 2001 – 2005. In 2006 an estimated 98,298 Dolly Varden were caught in the Kenai River.

The department does not have an estimate of the catch and release mortality rate for the rainbow trout or Dolly Varden in the Kenai River fisheries. We do know that estimates of the catch of rainbow trout in the Upper and Middle Kenai River are high in relation to the numbers of rainbow trout thought to inhabit these river sections. Research to estimate the abundance of rainbow trout in a portion of the Upper Kenai River was undertaken during the mid-1980's, 1995 and in 2001 and in the Middle Kenai River during 1987 and 1999. Research findings show that the abundance of rainbow trout in both areas increased over time. In the Upper River the population estimate increased from 2,250 rainbow trout in 1986 to 6,826 rainbow trout in 2001, while in the Middle River the population was estimated to be 1,750 rainbow trout in 1986 and increased to 7,882 rainbow trout by 1999. These data point-out that the catch rate for the population is high, in other words most individual rainbow trout are caught and released numerous times over a life span.

Estimates of the catch and release mortality of rainbow trout available through the fisheries literature vary considerably. Factors such as gear type, water temperature, fish size, fighting time and handling techniques influence the mortality rate. Overall, the literature points to the fact that fishing with bait for rainbow trout is not commensurate with conservative management objectives. Furthermore, regulations that control hook size and type are not considered as major factors that contribute to achieving conservative management objectives, because the efficacy of these regulations can be difficult to measure. The current management objectives for rainbow trout and Dolly Varden fisheries of the Kenai River are:

1. To provide the opportunity for angler participation at a level that can be supported by the fisheries resource and associated habitat.

2. To ensure, through appropriate management and research programs, that the rainbow trout and Dolly Varden populations do not decline below levels necessary to ensure sustained yield.

Based upon the increases in population size of rainbow trout as well as high catch rates of both rainbow trout and Dolly Varden the management objectives for these fisheries are being met.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The Department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal because it is a social issue not a biological issue. Rainbow trout fishing is closed during spawning to protect the breeding segment of the population during an import stage of their life history. Proper catch and release handling throughout the remainder of the year that includes removing small fish from the water prior to release may largely be a philosophical argument since there is evidence to suggest that it not does have a significant impact on viability or cause increased mortality, when done properly. The photograph of a rainbow trout or a Dolly Varden may be considered as the harvest for many anglers who practice catch and release. Data points out the facts that catch of these species in the Kenai River is high in relation to their abundance indicating that many survive multiple captures repeatedly. Enforcement may currently issue citations to those excessively handling a fish after it is removed from the water under the definition of "molesting" which in part includes dragging, kicking, throwing, striking, or otherwise abusing a fish that is intended to be released.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 243 - 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area; 5 AAC 57.122. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Middle Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area; and 5 AAC 57.123. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means

for the Upper Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: George Krumm

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would require the use of a single, barbless hook in the Kenai River upstream of Lower Killey River from August 21 to June 10.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? In the Kenai River from its mouth upstream to the outlet of Skilak Lake, only one unbaited single-hook lure is allowed from January 1 to June 30. From July 1 – July 31, bait is allowed, but anglers must still use only one single-hook lure.

In the Kenai River from its mouth upstream to the Upper Killey River, bait and multiple hooks are allowed from August 1 – October 31.

In the Kenai River from the Upper Killey River confluence upstream to Skilak Lake, bait and multiple hooks are allowed from August 1 – September 1; and only unbaited single-hook lures are allowed from September 1 to December 31.

In the Upper Kenai River upstream of Skilak Lake, only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure is allowed year-round, with the gap between point and shank of three-eighths inch or less.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Opportunity to land fish may be reduced since it is generally considered to be more difficult to land fish without a barb on the hook. The hook may be removed from the fish easily since it is generally considered to be more difficult to remove a hook from a fish that has a barb on it. The effect of barbless hooks on mortality is unknown because research on mortality due to hook type is inconclusive.

BACKGROUND: Studies of fish caught and released using sport fishing gear are inconclusive as to the effect on fish survival using barbless hooks, single hooks, and single barbless hooks. These studies have shown that hooking mortality is generally related to the location of the hook wound. Estimates of the catch and release mortality of rainbow trout available through the literature vary considerably. Factors such as gear type, water temperature, fish size, fighting time and handling techniques influence the mortality rate. Overall, the literature points to the fact that fishing with bait for rainbow trout is not commensurate with conservative management objectives.

Angler participation in rainbow trout fishing measured by catch of rainbow trout in the Kenai River has increased greatly since 1990. Catch averaged 28,787 rainbow from 1984 - 1994 and increased to an average of about 101,000 from 1995 - 2005. The reported catch for 2006 the most recent year available was 131,819 rainbow trout. Similar catch trends in the Dolly Varden fishery are also evident as catch averaged 72,439 fish from

1990 - 2000 and increased to an average of 110,778 Dolly Varden from 2001 – 2005. In 2006 an estimated 98,298 Dolly Varden were caught in the Kenai River.

The department does not have an estimate of the catch and release mortality rate for the rainbow trout or Dolly Varden in the Kenai River fisheries. We do know that estimates of the catch of rainbow trout in the Upper and Middle Kenai River are high in relation to the numbers of rainbow trout thought to inhabit these river sections. Research to estimate the abundance of rainbow trout in a portion of the Upper Kenai River was undertaken during the mid-1980's, 1995 and in 2001 and in the Middle Kenai River during 1987 and 1999. Research findings show that the abundance of rainbow trout in both areas increased over time. In the Upper River the population estimate increased from 2,250 rainbow trout in 1986 to 6,826 rainbow trout in 2001, while in the Middle River the population was estimated to be 1,750 rainbow trout in 1986 and increased to 7,882 rainbow trout by 1999. These data point-out that the catch rate for the population is high, in other words most individual rainbow trout are caught and released numerous times over a life span.

Estimates of the catch and release mortality of rainbow trout available through the fisheries literature vary considerably. Factors such as gear type, water temperature, fish size, fighting time and handling techniques influence the mortality rate. Overall, the literature points to the fact that fishing with bait for rainbow trout is not commensurate with conservative management objectives. Furthermore, regulations that control hook size and type are not consider as major factors that contribute to achieving conservative management objectives, because the efficacy of these regulations can be difficult to measure. The current management objectives for rainbow trout and Dolly Varden fisheries of the Kenai River are:

1. To provide the opportunity for angler participation at a level that can be supported by the fisheries resource and associated habitat.

2. To ensure, through appropriate management and research programs, that the rainbow trout and Dolly Varden populations do not decline below levels necessary to ensure sustained yield.

Based upon the increases in population size of rainbow trout as well as high catch rates of both rainbow trout and Dolly Varden the management objectives for these fisheries are being met.

<u>DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:</u> The department **OPPOSES** this proposal because there is no biological evidence to support the conclusion that fishing with barbless hooks will result in a measurable increase in the abundance of rainbow trout or Dolly Varden. The area and dates specified under this proposal are already managed primarily under unbaited, one single-hook, artificial lure only regulations.

<u>COST ANALYSIS:</u> The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 244 - 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Cooper Landing Fish and Game Advisory Board

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would require the use of barbless hooks or hooks with pinched barbs with a hook gap no greater than 3/8" when targeting rainbow trout and Dolly Varden in the Kenai River.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? In the Kenai River from its mouth upstream to the outlet of Skilak Lake, only one unbaited single-hook lure is allowed from January 1 to June 30. From July 1 – July 31, bait is allowed, but anglers must still use only one single-hook lure.

In the Kenai River from its mouth upstream to the Upper Killey River, bait and multiple hooks are allowed from August 1 – October 31.

In the Kenai River from the Upper Killey River confluence upstream to Skilak Lake, bait and multiple hooks are allowed from August 1 – September 1; and only unbaited single-hook lures are allowed from September 1 to December 31.

In the Upper Kenai River upstream of Skilak Lake, only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure is allowed year-round, with the gap between point and shank of three-eighths inch or less.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Opportunity to land fish may be reduced since it is generally considered to be more difficult to land fish without a barb on the hook. The hook may be removed from the fish easily since it is generally considered to be more difficult to remove a hook from a fish that has a barb on it. The effect of barbless hooks on mortality is unknown because research on mortality due to hook type is inconclusive.

BACKGROUND: Studies of fish caught and released using sport fishing gear are inconclusive as to the effect on fish survival using barbless hooks, single hooks, and single barbless hooks. These studies have shown that hooking mortality is generally related to the location of the hook wound. Estimates of the catch and release mortality of rainbow trout available through the literature vary considerably. Factors such as gear type, water temperature, fish size, fighting time and handling techniques influence the mortality rate. Overall, the literature points to the fact that fishing with bait for rainbow trout is not commensurate with conservative management objectives.

Angler participation in rainbow trout fishing measured by catch of rainbow trout in the Kenai River has increased greatly since 1990. Catch averaged 28,787 rainbow from 1984 - 1994 and increased to an average of about 101,000 from 1995 - 2005. The reported catch for 2006 the most recent year available was 131,819 rainbow trout. Similar catch

trends in the Dolly Varden fishery are also evident as catch averaged 72,439 fish from 1990 - 2000 and increased to an average of 110,778 Dolly Varden from 2001 – 2005. In 2006 an estimated 98,298 Dolly Varden were caught in the Kenai River.

The department does not have an estimate of the catch and release mortality rate for the rainbow trout or Dolly Varden in the Kenai River fisheries. We do know that estimates of the catch of rainbow trout in the Upper and Middle Kenai River are high in relation to the numbers of rainbow trout thought to inhabit these river sections. Research to estimate the abundance of rainbow trout in a portion of the Upper Kenai River was undertaken during the mid-1980's, 1995 and in 2001 and in the Middle Kenai River during 1987 and 1999. Research findings show that the abundance of rainbow trout in both areas increased over time. In the Upper River the population estimate increased from 2,250 rainbow trout in 1986 to 6,826 rainbow trout in 2001, while in the Middle River the population was estimated to be 1,750 rainbow trout in 1986 and increased to 7,882 rainbow trout by 1999. These data point-out that the catch rate for the population is high, in other words most individual rainbow trout are caught and released numerous times over a life span.

Estimates of the catch and release mortality of rainbow trout available through the fisheries literature vary considerably. Factors such as gear type, water temperature, fish size, fighting time and handling techniques influence the mortality rate. Overall, the literature points to the fact that fishing with bait for rainbow trout is not commensurate with conservative management objectives. Furthermore, regulations that control hook size and type are not consider as major factors that contribute to achieving conservative management objectives, because the efficacy of these regulations can be difficult to measure. The current management objectives for rainbow trout and Dolly Varden fisheries of the Kenai River are:

1. To provide the opportunity for angler participation at a level that can be supported by the fisheries resource and associated habitat.

2. To ensure, through appropriate management and research programs, that the rainbow trout and Dolly Varden populations do not decline below levels necessary to ensure sustained yield.

Based upon the increases in population size of rainbow trout as well as high catch rates of both rainbow trout and Dolly Varden the management objectives for these fisheries are being met.

<u>DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:</u> The department **OPPOSES** this proposal because there is no biological evidence to support the conclusion that fishing with barbless hooks will result in a measurable increase in the abundance of rainbow trout or Dolly Varden. The area and dates specified under this proposal are already managed primarily under unbaited, one single-hook, artificial lure only regulations.

<u>COST ANALYSIS:</u> The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 245 - 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Ted Wellman

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would prohibit the use of treble hooks, barbed hooks, and any hook larger than a no. 6 size when targeting rainbow trout and Dolly Varden in the Kenai River upstream of the confluence of Moose River.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? In the Kenai River from its mouth upstream to the outlet of Skilak Lake, only one unbaited single-hook lure is allowed from January 1 to June 30. From July 1 – July 31, bait is allowed, but anglers must still use only one single-hook lure.

In the Kenai River from its mouth upstream to the Upper Killey River, bait and multiple hooks are allowed from August 1 – October 31.

In the Kenai River from the Upper Killey River confluence upstream to Skilak Lake, bait and multiple hooks are allowed from August 1 – September 1; and only unbaited single-hook lures are allowed from September 1 to December 31.

In the Upper Kenai River upstream of Skilak Lake, only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure is allowed year-round, with the gap between point and shank of three-eighths inch or less.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Opportunity to land fish may be reduced since it is generally considered to be more difficult to land fish without a barb on the hook. The hook may be removed from the fish easily since it is generally considered to be more difficult to remove a hook from a fish that has a barb on it. The effect of barbless hooks on mortality is unknown because research on mortality due to hook type is inconclusive.

BACKGROUND: Studies of fish caught and released using sport fishing gear are inconclusive as to the effect on fish survival using barbless hooks, single hooks, and single barbless hooks. These studies have shown that hooking mortality is generally related to the location of the hook wound. Estimates of the catch and release mortality of rainbow trout available through the literature vary considerably. Factors such as gear type, water temperature, fish size, fighting time and handling techniques influence the mortality rate. Overall, the literature points to the fact that fishing with bait for rainbow trout is not commensurate with conservative management objectives.

Angler participation in rainbow trout fishing measured by catch of rainbow trout in the Kenai River has increased greatly since 1990. Catch averaged 28,787 rainbow from 1984 - 1994 and increased to an average of about 101,000 from 1995 - 2005. The reported

catch for 2006 the most recent year available was 131,819 rainbow trout. Similar catch trends in the Dolly Varden fishery are also evident as catch averaged 72,439 fish from 1990 - 2000 and increased to an average of 110,778 Dolly Varden from 2001 – 2005. In 2006 an estimated 98,298 Dolly Varden were caught in the Kenai River.

The department does not have an estimate of the catch and release mortality rate for the rainbow trout or Dolly Varden in the Kenai River fisheries. We do know that estimates of the catch of rainbow trout in the Upper and Middle Kenai River are high in relation to the numbers of rainbow trout thought to inhabit these river sections. Research to estimate the abundance of rainbow trout in a portion of the Upper Kenai River was undertaken during the mid-1980's, 1995 and in 2001 and in the Middle Kenai River during 1987 and 1999. Research findings show that the abundance of rainbow trout in both areas increased over time. In the Upper River the population estimate increased from 2,250 rainbow trout in 1986 to 6,826 rainbow trout in 2001, while in the Middle River the population was estimated to be 1,750 rainbow trout in 1986 and increased to 7,882 rainbow trout by 1999. These data point-out that the catch rate for the population is high, in other words most individual rainbow trout are caught and released numerous times over a life span.

Estimates of the catch and release mortality of rainbow trout available through the fisheries literature vary considerably. Factors such as gear type, water temperature, fish size, fighting time and handling techniques influence the mortality rate. Overall, the literature points to the fact that fishing with bait for rainbow trout is not commensurate with conservative management objectives. Furthermore, regulations that control hook size and type are not consider as major factors that contribute to achieving conservative management objectives, because the efficacy of these regulations can be difficult to measure. The current management objectives for rainbow trout and Dolly Varden fisheries of the Kenai River are:

1. To provide the opportunity for angler participation at a level that can be supported by the fisheries resource and associated habitat.

2. To ensure, through appropriate management and research programs, that the rainbow trout and Dolly Varden populations do not decline below levels necessary to ensure sustained yield.

Based upon the increases in population size of rainbow trout as well as high catch rates of both rainbow trout and Dolly Varden the management objectives for these fisheries are being met.

<u>DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:</u> The department **OPPOSES** this proposal because there is no biological evidence to support the conclusion that fishing with barbless hooks will result in a measurable increase in the abundance of rainbow trout or Dolly Varden. The area and dates specified under this proposal are already managed primarily under unbaited, one single-hook, artificial lure only regulations. Furthermore, the variation in hook sizes for 6/0 hooks makes this section of the proposal ineffective and the inability to identify a 6/0 hook makes it unenforceable. There is a substantial variation among hook

brands and styles as to what is designated as a 6/0 hook. Unless an enforcement officer could readily determine the brand and model of hook, it would be virtually impossible to determine if the hook was 6/0 or smaller. If the board adopts a hook size limitation, we recommend that hook requirements be defined by the following language: "a hook with gap between the point and shank greater than x/y inches" (3/8 inch, ½ inch, etc.).

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 246 - 5 AAC 57.122. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Middle Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: John Sanderson

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would close the waters of the mainstem Kenai River at approximately river-mile 47 between the upper and lower boundary signs delineating the swan sanctuary to all fishing from an anchored boat during the period June 15-December 31.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Fishing from an anchored vessel is allowed during this time period. However, under Title 11 of the Alaska Administration Code (11 AAC 20.862. Boating Methods), there is a Department of Natural Resources regulation that states:
(b) A person may not anchor a boat in the Kenai River Special Management Area in a manner obstructing a primary traffic channel or drift fishing channel of any section of the river.

WHAT WOULD THE EFFECT BE IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Restrict boat anglers who fish while anchored in that area of the Kenai River extending upstream from approximately river mile 47 to river mile 50 near the outlet of Skilak Lake from using an anchor while fishing. Hunters, other boat users and non-fishing anglers would still be allowed to anchor in this area of the Kenai River.

BACKGROUND: Current DNR regulations stipulate that no one may anchor a boat such that it obstructs the primary traffic channel. U.S. Coast Guard regulations for inland waterways also state that obstruction of the navigable channel is prohibited for reasons of safety. Nonetheless, during the past several years members of the fishing public using this area of the river have complained of conflicting uses by powerboat and anchoring, drift boat fishermen.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. This proposal addresses a social issue between competing uses of the river or a potential safety issue with no biological concerns that require board action.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 247 - 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Philip Brower

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would eliminate the size restrictions for Dolly Varden on the entire Kenai River drainage.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The bag and possession limits for Dolly Varden in the Kenai River drainage are as follows:

Kenai Lake drainages:

- in flowing waters (1 per day/1 in possession; *must be less than 16" long*)
- in lakes and ponds (2 per day/2 in possession; *only 1 (one) fish 20" or longer*)

Upper Kenai River tributaries:

- in flowing waters (1 per day/1 in possession; *must be less than 16" long*)
- in lakes and ponds (2 per day/2 in possession; *only 1 (one) fish 20" or longer*)

Lower Kenai River tributaries:

- in flowing waters (1 per day/1 in possession; *must be less than 18" long*)
- in lakes and ponds (2 per day/2 in possession; *only 1 (one) fish 20" or longer*)
- in stocked lakes and ponds (5 per day/5 in possession; *only 1 (one) fish 20" or longer*)

Lower Kenai River mainstem and Skilak Lake:

- in all waters (1 per day/1 in possession; *must be less than 18" long*)

Upper Kenai River mainstem and Russian River:

- in all waters (1 per day/1 in possession; *must be less than 16" long*)

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Harvest of Dolly Varden over 18" or 16" in length would increase by an unknown amount. Harvest of large breeding Dolly Varden would increase thereby impacting the reproductive capability of the stock.

BACKGROUND: Regulations for the management of Dolly Varden in the Northern Kenai Peninsula Management Area (NKPMA) have been noteworthy for the series of incremental changes that have occurred during the past 10-15 years. Many of these regulation changes were focused upon specific areas of the Kenai River. Over time, these regulations contributed to a system of complex and often conflicting measures that have

not always served the public or the resource well. During the 2005 BOF cycle, the department, at the urging of the public, sought recommendations to modify the codified regulations in order to resolve inconsistencies and develop a concise order of regulations that recognize important biological and social implications. The various proposals under consideration at that time aimed to lessen complexity and provide for more consistent regulations that addressed the biological and social considerations of managing Dolly Varden resources of the NKPMA.

Research illustrate that approximately 30% of Dolly Varden female spawners are less than 18 inches. The proportion of female spawners less than 20 inches is nearly 70%. Within the two inch zone between 18 and 20 inches is situated approximately 40% of the spawning female Dolly Varden. Length distributions for captured Dolly Varden indicate that 85% of all Dolly Varden are less than 20 inches and 70% are less than 18 inches. Providing for an 18 inch harvest cutoff protects twice as many female spawners as the 20 inch limit; 15% of the total population versus 7.5%, recognizing that 50% of the total population are females. The abundance of Dolly Varden has not been estimated historically however, given that the majority of the reproductive segment in the population is protected under the current regulation the fishery is thought to be sustainable under the existing regulatory structure.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. The current regulations for Dolly Varden incorporate important biological and social factors that the board, department, and stakeholders have previously reviewed.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 248 - 5 AAC 57.122. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Middle Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai River Fishermen's Coalition

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would increase the daily bag/possession limit of Arctic Char/Dolly Varden in Cooper Lake from 2 per day and in possession to 5 per day and in possession of which only one could be 20 inches or greater in length.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The limit for Arctic Char/Dolly Varden in Cooper Lake is 2 per day and in possession of which only one may be 20 inches or greater in length.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Fishing effort and harvest of Arctic Char/Dolly Varden may increase by an unknown amount

BACKGROUND: Cooper Lake was intermittently stocked with rainbow trout and king salmon from 1984 – 1994 and is not considered a candidate water for future stocking. Fishing effort at Cooper Lake is relatively low and supports a catch of rainbow trout and Arctic char/Dolly Varden generally numbering in the hundreds of fish.

A Cooper Lake fish resources study for compliance with Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) re-licensing requirements for the Cooper Lake Hydroelectric Project (Project) was conducted during 2003-2004. One element of the study was to estimate abundance of Arctic Char/Dolly Varden in Cooper Lake. A series of mark and recapture experiments were conducted to gain insight into abundance of adult and subadult Arctic char. Mark - recapture models for both closed and open populations were employed to estimate abundance. The estimated abundance of Arctic Char/Dolly Varden in Cooper Lake from the various models ranged from approximately 58,000 to 109,000 fish, however the most sophisticated model estimated the abundance at approximately 94,000 Arctic Char/Dolly Varden in Cooper Lake.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. Although this proposal conflicts with the consistent regulatory package for Kenai River drainage Arctic char/Dolly Varden. An acceptable solution in response to the low harvest levels and abundant population would be to align limits at Cooper Lake with the stocked lake limits for the NKPMA

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 249 - 5 AAC 57.121(6). Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would decrease the bag and possession limit of lake trout in Hidden Lake from 2 fish of any size to 1 fish of any size.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The bag and possession limit for lake trout in Hidden Lake is 2 fish with no size limit.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Harvest of lake trout in Hidden Lake would decrease by an unknown amount. It may also result in an increase in fishing effort in the future if the numbers, age, and size of lake trout in the population increase by a reduction in the harvest.

BACKGROUND: Lake trout harvest regulations at Hidden Lake are liberal. The bag limit was 10 between 1948 and 1968. In 1969 the bag limit remained at 10 of which only 2 could be over 20 inches. In 1983 the fishery was liberalized to allow a bag limit of

12 lake trout: 2 over 20 inches and 10 under 20 inches. In 1997 the regulations changed to the current limit of 2 per day and in possession regardless of size. Concurrent to the 1997 bag limit reduction from 12 fish to 2 fish was the closure of Hidden Lake to burbot fishing. The closure reduced the number of lines that could be used by anglers fishing through the ice from 15 lines to just 2 lines.

Due to regulation changes lake trout harvest at Hidden Lake estimated through the SWHS declined sharply from 1,131 fish in 1996 to just 524 fish in 1997. Prior to 1997 the average harvest was about 1,350 fish and has averaged approximately 360 fish since 1997.

Lake trout populations generally exist at low densities have slow growth rates, mature at a relatively old age, low fecundity, alternate-year spawning regimes and strict habitat requirements. Due to these life history characteristics, lake trout can be over exploited by relatively low harvest rates. Consequently, many Alaska lake trout fisheries are conservatively managed yield-based fisheries. In these fisheries a general lake area model is used to estimate annual yield potential (sustainable harvest) and regulations are designed to ensure annual harvest do not exceed the yield potential. The lake area model indicates the sustainable yield for Hidden Lake may be approximately 400 lake trout per year.

The estimated lake trout harvest from Hidden Lake exceeded the estimated yield potential for 25 of the last 29 years. The abundance, size or age structure of the lake trout population of Hidden Lake is not presently known nor is the historical size and age structure precisely known. Given these facts, there is concern that lake trout of Hidden Lake may have been overexploited to a level necessary to ensure sustained yield. Recent angler and department observations indicate yield at this roadside fishery may not allow the lake trout population in Hidden Lake to grow to historic, abundance, size and age structure as represented with the low numbers of lake trout in angler catches and lack of larger lake trout being caught by anglers. Although the most recent harvest estimate in 2006 was 386 lake trout, it is likely the current regulation of two lake trout per day will permit future yields to exceed the estimated sustainable yield of approximately 400 fish if the bag limit is not reduced.

Department objectives for the lake trout fishery are to: 1) provide the opportunity for angler participation at a level that can be supported by the fisheries resource and associated habitat, and 2) ensure through appropriate management and research programs, that the population does not decline below the level necessary to ensure sustained yield.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department submitted and **SUPPORTS** this proposal. The department views this as a necessary action to ensure the sustainable harvest of lake trout from Hidden Lake.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 250 - 5 AAC 57.121(1)(I). Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area; and 5 AAC 57.122(4). Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Middle Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow the use of up to five lines to fish for pike through the ice in Arc Lake and Scout Lake.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Unless otherwise provided in regulations, sport fishing may be conducted only by use of a single line attached to not more than one plug, spoon, spinner, or two flies, or two hooks. The line must be closely attended.

Except in Alexander Lake, northern pike may be taken by spear, sport fishing gear, ice fishing gear, or by bow and arrow (the arrow must be attached to the bow with a line and the arrow must have a barbed tip). When fishing through the ice for pike, anglers may use two hooks on a single line, provided that both hooks are attached to one single piece of bait.

In the following lakes, sport fishing through the ice for northern pike is allowed using 5 lines, provided that: (1) standard ice fishing gear is used, (2) the fishing gear is closely attended, and (3) all other species of fish caught are released immediately.

Northern Cook Inlet: Figure Eight, Sucker, Flathorn, Lower Vern, UpperVern, Lockwood, Whiskey, Hewitt, Donkey, Threemile/Tukhallah, Trapper, Trail, Neil, and Kroto lakes, No Name/Cabin Lake, and lakes of the Nancy Lake Recreation Area (except Nancy lake).

Kenai Peninsula: Mackey lakes, Tote Road Lakes, and Derks, Sevena, Cisca, and Union lakes.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would likely attract anglers to participate in the winter ice fisheries at Arc and Scout Lake and result in the increase in harvest of northern pike by an unknown amount.

BACKGROUND: Northern pike are not native to the Kenai Peninsula. Through illegal stocking northern pike have established populations in several NKPMA lakes. Recently northern pike were discovered in Arc Lake (2000) and Scout Lake (2005). These lakes were previously stocked by the department and supported recreational fisheries for rainbow trout and land–locked king salmon. Since discovery of northern pike stocking has been discontinued.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department submitted and **SUPPORTS** this proposal. The department views this as a necessary housekeeping proposal to take action to reduce invasive northern pike in these waters.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 251 - 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Bryan Copenhaver

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Allow the use of up to five lines to fish for pike in Stormy Lake.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Unless otherwise provided in regulations, sport fishing may be conducted only by use of a single line attached to not more than one plug, spoon, spinner, or two flies, or two hooks. The line must be closely attended.

Except in Alexander Lake, northern pike may be taken by spear, sport fishing gear, ice fishing gear, or by bow and arrow (the arrow must be attached to the bow with a line and the arrow must have a barbed tip). When fishing through the ice for pike, anglers may use two hooks on a single line, provided that both hooks are attached to one single piece of bait.

In the following lakes, sport fishing through the ice for northern pike is allowed using 5 lines, provided that: (1) standard ice fishing gear is used, (2) the fishing gear is closely attended, and (3) all other species of fish caught are released immediately.

Northern Cook Inlet: Figure Eight, Sucker, Flathorn, Lower Vern, UpperVern, Lockwood, Whiskey, Hewitt, Donkey, Threemile/Tukhallah, Trapper, Trail, Neil, and Kroto lakes, No Name/Cabin Lake, and lakes of the Nancy Lake Recreation Area (except Nancy lake).

Kenai Peninsula: Mackey lakes, Tote Road Lakes, and Derks, Sevena, Cisca, and Union lakes.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would likely attract anglers to participate in the northern pike fishery at Stormy lake and result in the increase in harvest of northern pike by an unknown amount.

BACKGROUND: Northern pike are not native to the Kenai Peninsula. Through illegal stocking northern pike have established populations in several NKPMA lakes. Northern

pike are known to have been present in Stormy Lake for approximately 3 decades. An outlet stream in the northwest corner of the lake drains into the lower Swanson River. The Swanson River is a major coho salmon producing drainage that also supports sockeye salmon. The drainage consists of several small creeks and interconnected lakes that also support native rainbow trout and Dolly Varden. Migration of northern pike into the Swanson River drainage is a concern for the department due to the negative impact an established northern pike population could have on Pacific salmon stocks as well as other resident fish.

Stormy Lake supports native populations of rainbow trout, Dolly Varden, longnose sucker and also provides rearing habitat for juvenile salmon. Sport fisheries for rainbow trout and Dolly Varden remain viable however they have been impacted to an unknown degree by invasive northern pike. Northern pike are somewhat popular to fish for through the ice at Stormy Lake due to the potential to catch a fish of large size, fighting ability and lack of other fishing opportunities during the winter. Small harvests are reported annually by the SWHS. Therefore, measures to reduce the numbers of northern pike while maintaining native fish stocks could be undertaken through application of seasonal regulations which make them easier to catch. Similar regulations have been applied in other areas of Cook Inlet.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** this proposal with modification to allow up to five lines to increase exploitation of northern pike during the winter fishery through the ice while maintaining current harvest levels of native species. The department views this as a necessary action to reduce invasive northern pike in these waters.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 252. Page 220. 5 AAC 56.120 (7). GENERAL PROVISIONS FOR SEASONS, BAG, POSSESSION, AND SIZE LIMITS, AND METHODS AND MEANS FOR THE KENAI PENINSULA AREA; AND 5 AAC 57.120. GENERAL PROVISIONS FOR SEASONS, BAG, POSSESSION, AND SIZE LIMITS, AND METHODS AND MEANS FOR THE KENAI RIVER DRAINAGE AREA.

PROPOSED BY: Natalee Vanderford

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would prohibit releasing alive any sport, commercial, personal use, or subsistence caught northern pike within all freshwaters of the Kenai Peninsula.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? In all waters of the Kenai Peninsula northern pike can be taken using spears, bow and arrow (with arrow attached by a line), bait, spinning, and fly-fishing gear. There is no closed season for northern pike and the bag and possession limit is unlimited. Wanton waste laws apply

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? The harvest of northern pike would be increased by an unknown amount. This proposal would require all pike to be harvested whether or not the angler prefers to keep them or not.

BACKGROUND: Northern pike are not native to the Kenai Peninsula. Through illegal stocking northern pike have established populations in several NKPMA lakes. Northern pike are known to have been present in Kenai Peninsula fresh waters for approximately 3 decades. Migration of northern pike into drainages is a concern for the department due to the negative impact northern pike have on native fish species including Pacific salmon stocks.

Stocked lakes supporting viable sport fisheries for rainbow trout and land-locked salmon have been eliminated due to the presence of northern pike. Additionally, northern pike have negatively impact production of naturally occurring native fish species including Pacific salmon stocks in the Soldotna Creek drainage, part of the Kenai River system. Northern pike are somewhat popular to fish for especially in winter through the ice due to the potential to catch a fish of large size, fighting ability and lack of other fishing opportunities during the winter. Small harvests are reported annually by the SWHS.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal to reduce the numbers of northern pike in Kenai Peninsula fresh waters. The provision of 5 AAC 75.065. Waste of fish; the intentional waste or destruction of any species of sport-caught fish is prohibited could be waived for northern pike to require retention without requiring consumption.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

COMMITTEE E: Kenai/Kasilof Salmon Sport Fisheries
(Total proposals: 42)

Kasilof River Salmon Sport Fisheries: 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234
Chickaloon River Salmon Sport Fisheries: 235
Russian River Sport Fisheries: 253, 254
Kenai River King Salmon Sport Fisheries: 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277
Kenai River Sockeye and Coho Salmon Sport Fisheries: 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 92

KASILOF RIVER SALMON SPORT FISHERIES

PROPOSAL 225 – 5 AAC 56.122(8)(A)(ii). Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai River Professional Guide Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would establish Thursday as an additional day each week that naturally-produced king salmon may be retained on the Kasilof River.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? In the Kasilof River drainage excluding Crooked Creek and Tustumena Lake and its tributaries: king salmon 20 inches or greater in length may be taken from January 1- June 30, upstream of Sterling highway Bridge, and from January 1- July 31, downstream of the Sterling highway Bridge; bag and possession limit of one fish; annual limit of five king salmon 20 inches or greater in length; a harvest record is required from January 1-June 30. A hatchery king salmon with a clipped adipose fin as evidenced by a healed fin clip scar where the adipose fin is normally located 20 inches or greater in length may retained daily. A hatchery king salmon 20 inches or greater in length that is removed from the water must be retained and becomes part of the bag limit of the person originally hooking it; a person may not remove a king salmon from the water before releasing the fish. A naturally-produced king salmon with an adipose fin intact may be retained on Tuesdays and Saturdays only prior to July 1. A naturally-produced king salmon 20 inches or greater in length that is removed from the water must be retained and becomes part of the bag limit of the person originally hooking it; a person may not remove a king salmon from the water before releasing the fish. In addition, the commissioner may, by emergency order, increase the days for retention of naturally produced king salmon.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Since the department has added a third day be emergency order the last two season, there would likely be little change to the existing fishery. Although providing a predictable harvest opportunity for anglers may result in a slight increase in angler participation.

BACKGROUND: Early-run Kasilof River king salmon originate from Crooked Creek, a Kasilof River tributary. Management of the early-run Kasilof River king salmon fishery

has undergone substantial changes since the late 1990's due to: 1) closure of the Crooked Creek hatchery as a sockeye salmon production facility, 2) changes in king salmon stocking levels, 3) establishment of a king salmon escapement goal, and 4) public access improvements that affected changes in king salmon fishing effort and regulations.

From 1988-1996 the number of naturally-produced king salmon in the spawning escapement in Crooked Creek upstream from the hatchery was held at approximately 700 fish. During this time total returns, supported mostly by annually stocking 210,000 king salmon smolt, were thought to range from approximately 2,800 to 8,600 fish. Harvest of early-run king salmon was first estimated by the statewide harvest survey in 1996. Returns from the years (1996-2001) of these high stocking levels supported an average annual early-run king salmon harvest 6,500 fish. Beginning in 1999, the number of fish allowed upstream of the weir to spawn was increased to approximately 2,700 king salmon. This action was taken to evaluate the potential returns from naturally-spawning king salmon as a means of compensating for a proposed reduction in stocking levels from 210,000 smolt to 105,000 smolt. In 2000 the number of smolt stocked was reduced in response to significant numbers of Crooked Creek early-run hatchery fish straying into Slikok Creek, a tributary of the Kenai River.

The current SEG, set in 2001, is a range of 650 to 1,700 naturally produced fish. The department annually enumerates the escapement and estimates the age, sex and length composition of naturally and hatchery produced king salmon returning to the Kasilof River at a weir located above the area open to fishing at the Crooked Creek facility. At the weir naturally-produced king salmon broodstock are collected for egg-takes to enhance the early-run return. Approximately 250 returning adult fish are utilized for broodstock and the resulting smolt production is returned to Crooked Creek. Hatchery produced king salmon adults that reach the weir are considered to be surplus stock excess to escapement needs. Additionally, a creel survey was conducted during the early-run fishery during 2003 through 2007 to estimate catch and harvest of early-run king salmon.

The retention of naturally-produced early-run king salmon from the Kasilof River was first prohibited by E.O. on June 12, 2002 because of increased angler participation due to the closure of the Kenai River and concern for not meeting the escapement goal. This action resulted in an escapement of 1,381 naturally-produced king salmon and an estimated harvest of 4,791 king salmon. In 2003, the Board of Fisheries passed regulations prohibiting retention of naturally-produced fish. During the 2003 and 2004 seasons when the harvest of naturally-produced king salmon was prohibited, a total of 3,078 and 2,422 hatchery king salmon were harvested, and the escapement goal was exceeded by 854 and 456 fish. An additional escapement of 1,115 and 2,160 hatchery king salmon also occurred showing there was still a surplus of hatchery and naturally-produced king salmon. Due to increasing escapements of naturally produced fish and fact that the natural production could likely sustain some level of harvest, the board adopted the current regulations in 2005 that allow the retention of naturally produced fish two days each week with the ability to allow an additional third day by emergency order. In 2006 and 2007, Thursday was added by emergency order as the third day naturally produced fish could be retained.

The numbers of naturally-produced king salmon in the escapement exceeded the goal in 2005 (1,903) and achieved the goal in 2006 (1,516) and 2007 (993), while escapement of surplus hatchery king salmon ranged from 652 to 1,052 king salmon. Total escapement of king salmon during 2002-2007 averaged over 3,300 fish.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** this proposal. The department considers this a housekeeping proposal because an emergency order adding one extra day/week has been issued the last two seasons and will continue to be issued in the future. The addition of a third day provides the department the ability to more appropriately manage the run to achieve the SEG of naturally-produced early-run king salmon. The department's approach to management of naturally-produced king salmon is precautionary in the anticipation of a better understanding of king salmon production at Crooked Creek.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 226 – 5 AAC 56.122(8)(A)(ii). Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area.

PROPOSED BY: Kasilof Land Owners Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would increase the bag and possession limit from one hatchery king salmon to two hatchery king salmon in the Kasilof River.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? In the Kasilof River drainage excluding Crooked Creek and Tustumena Lake and its tributaries: the bag and possession limit of king salmon 20 inches or greater in length is one fish.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? The fishery would be liberalized by increasing the bag and possession limit of hatchery king salmon and could: 1) increase angler participation, 2) reduce the numbers of hatchery produced king salmon in the spawning escapement, 3) possibly result in an increase in catch and release mortality of naturally-produced king salmon due to anglers sorting king salmon to retain a second hatchery king salmon, and 4) attract Kenai River anglers whom have attained a the daily bag limit to also fish the Kasilof River for a second king salmon the same day.

BACKGROUND: From 1988-1996 the number of naturally-produced king salmon in the spawning escapement in Crooked Creek upstream from the hatchery was held at approximately 700 fish. During this time total returns, supported mostly by annually stocking 210,000 king salmon smolt, were thought to range from approximately 2,800 to

8,600 fish. Harvest of early-run king salmon was first estimated by the statewide harvest survey in 1996. Returns from the years (1996-2001) of these high stocking levels supported an average annual early-run king salmon harvest 6,500 fish. Beginning in 1999, the number of fish allowed upstream of the weir to spawn was increased to approximately 2,700 king salmon. This action was taken to evaluate the potential returns from naturally-spawning king salmon as a means of compensating for a proposed reduction in stocking levels from 210,000 smolt to 105,000 smolt. In 2000 the number of smolt stocked was reduced in response to significant numbers of Crooked Creek early-run hatchery fish straying into Slikok Creek, a tributary of the Kenai River.

The current SEG, set in 2001, is a range of 650 to 1,700 naturally produced fish. In 2002 the department began counting the numbers of king salmon in the escapement. In addition, estimated the age, sex and length composition of naturally and hatchery produced king salmon returning to the Kasilof River at a weir located above the area open to fishing at the Crooked Creek facility. At the weir naturally-produced king salmon broodstock are collected for egg-takes to enhance the early-run return. Approximately 250 returning adult fish are utilized for broodstock and the resulting smolt production is returned to Crooked Creek. Hatchery produced king salmon adults that reach the weir are considered to be surplus stock excess to escapement needs. Additionally, a creel survey was conducted during the early-run fishery during 2003 through 2007 to estimate catch and harvest of early-run king salmon.

The retention of naturally-produced early-run king salmon from the Kasilof River was first prohibited by E.O. on June 12, 2002 because of increased angler participation due to the closure of the Kenai River and concern for not meeting the escapement goal. This action resulted in an escapement of 1,381 naturally-produced king salmon and an estimated harvest of 4,791 king salmon. In 2003, the Board of Fisheries passed regulations prohibiting retention of naturally-produced fish. During the 2003 and 2004 seasons when the harvest of naturally-produced king salmon was prohibited, a total of 3,078 and 2,422 hatchery king salmon were harvested, and the escapement goal was exceeded by 854 and 456 fish. An additional escapement of 1,115 and 2,160 hatchery king salmon also occurred showing there was still a surplus of hatchery and naturally-produced king salmon. Due to increasing escapements of naturally produced fish and fact that the natural production could likely sustain some level of harvest, the board adopted the current regulations in 2005 that allow the retention of naturally produced fish two days each week with the ability to allow an additional third day by emergency order. In 2006 and 2007, Thursday was added by emergency order as the third day naturally produced fish could be retained.

The numbers of naturally-produced king salmon in the escapement exceeded the goal in 2005 (1,903) and achieved the goal in 2006 (1,516) and 2007 (993), while escapement of surplus hatchery king salmon ranged from 652 to 1,052 king salmon. Total escapement of king salmon during 2002-2007 averaged over 3,300 fish.

<u>DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:</u> The department **SUPPORTS** this proposal as a method of increasing hatchery king salmon exploitation so that future surpluses can be utilized.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 227 – 5 AAC 56.122(8)(A)(ii). Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area.

PROPOSED BY: Friends of the Kasilof River Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would prohibit anglers from continuing to fish in the Kasilof River once they have retained the bag limit of king salmon from the Kasilof River.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? In the Kasilof River drainage excluding Crooked Creek and Tustumena Lake and its tributaries: an angler may continue to fish after retaining a bag limit of king salmon.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would restrict anglers that may fish for sockeye salmon and other species after retaining a bag limit of king salmon, thus it may decrease exploitation of Kasilof River sockeye salmon and impact angler effort to some unknown degree. The catch and release mortality of king salmon would likely decrease by some unknown amount.

BACKGROUND: The Kasilof River supports both early and late run king salmon. King salmon returning to the Kasilof River prior to July 1 originate primarily from Crooked Creek, a Kasilof River tributary and are managed as early-run fish and. Late-run king salmon return during July – early September and originate primarily from the mainstem and to a lesser extent Crooked Creek. The SEG for early-run king salmon is 650 to 1,700 naturally-produced fish. The department annually enumerates the escapement and estimates the age, sex and length composition of naturally and hatchery produced king salmon returning to the Kasilof River at a weir located above the area open to fishing at the Crooked Creek facility. At the weir naturally-produced king salmon broodstock are collected for egg-takes to enhance the early-run return. Approximately 250 returning adult fish are utilized for broodstock and the resulting smolt production is returned to Crooked Creek. Hatchery produced king salmon adults that reach the weir are considered to be surplus stock excess to escapement needs. Additionally, a creel survey was conducted during the early-run fishery during 2003 through 2007 to estimate catch and harvest of early-run king salmon.

There is no escapement goal for Kasilof River late-run king salmon. From 1996-2006 harvest estimated by the Statewide Harvest Survey has averaged 931 late-run king salmon. In 2005 the department began a late-run king salmon assessment program to estimate run-timing and spawning distribution. Information gained from this first year

allowed the department to add a mark-recapture phase to the program to estimate abundance of late-run Kasilof River king salmon in 2006-2007.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal because it unduly restricts anglers that may want to fish primarily for sockeye salmon after they have retained a bag limit of king salmon. The department has been successful in achieving the goal range for naturally-produced early-run king salmon and is supportive of regulations to liberalize harvest of hatchery king salmon. Overall the department has no biological concern for either the early or late-runs that would warrant restricting anglers from continuing to fish for other species of fish after retaining a bag limit of king salmon.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 228 – 5 AAC 56.122. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai River Sport Fishing Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would prohibit fishing in an area of the upper Kasilof River from July 1 through August 31 to protect spawning king salmon. It would designate an area of the Kasilof River from the Sterling Highway Bridge upstream to Tustemena Lake as a king salmon spawning sanctuary.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Fishing in the Kasilof River is open the entire year. Relative to king salmon fishing, in the Kasilof River drainage excluding Crooked Creek and Tustumena Lake and its tributaries: king salmon 20 inches or greater in length may be taken from January 1- June 30, upstream of Sterling highway Bridge, and from January 1- July 31, downstream of the Sterling highway Bridge; bag and possession limit of one fish; annual limit of five king salmon 20 inches or greater in length; a harvest record is required from January 1-June 30. A naturally-produced king salmon with an adipose fin intact may be retained on Tuesdays and Saturdays only prior to July 1. For other salmon 16” or greater in length fishing is open the entire year; bag and possession limit of three fish; of which only two per day and in possession may be coho salmon.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would decrease the area above the Sterling Highway Bridge open to fishing. Fishing opportunity for sockeye and coho salmon as well as for resident species would decrease. Incidental catch of and illegal fishing for king salmon would decrease thereby giving protection to king salmon in their spawning habitats. Enforcement of current closure to king salmon fishing upstream of the Sterling Highway Bridge would be simplified.

BACKGROUND: The Kasilof River supports both early and late run king salmon. King salmon returning to the Kasilof River prior to July 1 originate primarily from Crooked Creek, a Kasilof River tributary and are managed as early-run fish and. Late-run king salmon return during July – early September and originate primarily from the mainstem and to a lesser extent Crooked Creek. Late-run king salmon are thought to spawn from mid-August through September. There is no escapement goal for Kasilof River late-run king salmon. From 1996-2006 harvest estimated by the Statewide Harvest Survey has averaged 931 late-run king salmon. In 2005 the department began a late-run king salmon assessment program to estimate run-timing and spawning distribution. Information gained from 2005 allowed the department to add a mark-recapture phase to the program to estimate abundance of late-run Kasilof River king salmon in 2006-2007.

Recently angler effort above the bridge during August has resulted in some enforcement problems associated with anglers actively attempting to take king salmon in an area closed to king salmon fishing under the guise of fishing for coho salmon. Current regulations allow anglers to fish throughout an area where pre-spawning aggregations of king salmon are easily identified and are vulnerable to fishing. Typically on this section of the Kasilof River during July and August anglers are fishing for sockeye and coho salmon and to a lesser extent resident species. When fishing for coho salmon anglers use a terminal gear configuration (line weight, hook and bait size) similar to that used to fish for king salmon in the Kasilof River. Consequently, anglers may target king salmon in waters closed to king salmon fishing under the false pretext of fishing for coho salmon. Since these anglers use similar terminal gear for coho salmon and generally do not harvest king salmon, law enforcement has difficulty enforcing the king salmon fishing closure. Fishing effort in the upper Kasilof River is relatively low in July and early August, closing sections of the river would result in a loss of fishing opportunity for coho salmon and resident species.

A Federal subsistence fishery also takes place in Kasilof River waters within the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge from the outlet of Tustumena Lake downstream to the first set of rapids (Silver Salmon Rapids). In this fishery salmon may be taken by dip net or rod and reel. Seasons and harvest limits depend on the species. Specifically, king and sockeye salmon may be taken from June 16 – August 15. The harvest limit for king salmon is 10 per permit holder and 2 for each additional household member, while for sockeye the harvest limit is 25 per permit holder and 5 for each additional household member. For coho and pink salmon the season is June 16 – October 31 and harvest limits are the same as those for king salmon (10 per permit holder and 2 for each additional household member).

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department in **NEUTRAL** on this proposal however is supportive of its king salmon conservation attributes because it is consist with a principle of the board adopted policy for the management of sustainable salmon fisheries, that salmon stocks should be protected within spawning habitats and it helps to prevent illegal fishing activity.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 229 – 5 AAC 56.122. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area.

PROPOSED BY: David Carpenter

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would prohibit the use of outboard powered boats on the Kasilof River upstream of the Old Kasilof Landing (also known as Trujillo's Landing located at approximately river mile 3.5).

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? In the Kasilof River drainage downstream of the Sterling Highway Bridge, from January 1-July 31, a person may not sport fish from a vessel that has on board a motor that is more than 10 horsepower; from January 1 – July 31, a motor may be used only between the mouth of the Kasilof River and Trujillo's Landing, and only after fishing from the vessel has ceased for the day; a person may not deploy sport fishing gear from a vessel after a motor has been used to propel that vessel on the same day. Sport fishing from a power boat is allowed after July 31 downstream of the Sterling Highway Bridge and year-round upstream of the Sterling Highway Bridge.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Power boat use on approximately 15.5 miles or about 80% of the Kasilof River would be eliminated downstream of the Sterling Highway Bridge. This proposal would decrease angler efficiency in that section of river and may reduce the harvest of coho salmon by an unknown amount. Most likely nonguided anglers would be impacted more than guided anglers in that anecdotal information indicates that few guides operate motorized vessels on the Kasilof River.

BACKGROUND: The board does not have authority to prohibit power boat use for non-fishing activities. Currently, the use of power boats in the Kasilof River is allowed year-round, but regulations prohibit a person from sport fishing from a vessel that has a motor in excess of 10 horsepower on board prior to August 1 below the Sterling Highway Bridge. From August through September anglers primarily fish for coho salmon. Although creel surveys are not conducted in the Kasilof River during the coho salmon fishery, catch and harvest information is collected from the SWHS. Coho salmon harvests in this fishery have been relatively stable and have not increased in recent years. For example, from 2001-2005 the coho salmon harvest averaged 4,891 fish. During 2006 the estimated harvest of coho salmon was 3,458 fish. Information separating out angling activity by motorized boats and non-motorized boats participating in the Kasilof River coho salmon sport fishery is not available. Observations by department staff suggests this fishery is comprised of primarily local anglers using predominantly drift boats although motorized boats are present, few are observed. At present the department has

no immediate concern for the biological status of Kasilof River coho salmon or habitat impacts caused by the limited number of power boats using the Kasilof River from August 1 through December 31.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. Habitat loss through riverbank erosion caused by power boat wakes has not been identified due to the relatively low level of power boat use. The department is **NEUTRAL** to the perceived social conflict between power boats and drift boats on the Kasilof River.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 230 – 5 AAC 56.122. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area.

PROPOSED BY: Friends of the Kasilof River

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would prohibit fishing or dip netting from a power boat on the Kasilof River between Trujillo's Landing located at approximately river mile 3.5 and slack water at approximately river mile 16.5.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? In the Kasilof River drainage downstream of the Sterling Highway Bridge, from January 1-July 31, a person may not sport fish from a vessel that has on board a motor that is more than 10 horsepower; from January 1 – July 31, a motor may be used only between the mouth of the Kasilof River and Trujillo's Landing, and only after fishing from the vessel has ceased for the day; a person may not deploy sport fishing gear from a vessel after a motor has been used to propel that vessel on the same day. Personal use dip netting is allowed from a vessel powered by an outboard motor from ADF&G regulatory markers located on the Cook Inlet beaches outside the terminus of the river upstream for a distance of one mile.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Fishing from a power boat would be prohibited on approximately 13 miles or nearly 70% of the Kasilof River after July 31. This proposal would decrease angler efficiency and may reduce the harvest of coho salmon by an unknown amount. This proposal would not impact dip netting from a power boat. Most likely non-guided anglers would be impacted more than guided anglers in that anecdotal information indicates that few guides operate motorized vessels on the Kasilof River.

BACKGROUND: Historically, throughout the 1970's and 1980's nearly all fishing conducted at the Kasilof River was from the shoreline. Beginning in the 1990's an increasing number of drift boats were used in the fishery. In 2002 the Board of Fisheries adopted regulations prohibiting fishing from a motorized vessel during king salmon season downstream of the Sterling Highway Bridge. This regulation was adopted in

recognition of the predominant use of drift boats in the fishery and to address the growing number of anglers participating in the Kasilof River early-run king salmon fishery.

From August through September anglers primarily fish for coho salmon. Although creel surveys are not conducted in the Kasilof River during the coho salmon fishery, catch and harvest information is collected from the SWHS. Coho salmon harvests in this fishery have been relatively stable and have not increased in recent years. For example, from 2001-2005 the coho salmon harvest averaged 4,891 fish. During 2006 the estimated harvest of coho salmon was 3,458 fish. Information separating out angling activity by motorized boats and non-motorized boats participating in the Kasilof River coho salmon sport fishery is not available. Observations by department staff suggests this fishery is comprised of primarily local anglers using predominantly drift boats although both motorized and non-motorized boats are present. At present the department has no immediate concern for the biological status of Kasilof River coho salmon or habitat impacts caused by the limited number of power boats using the Kasilof River from August 1 through December 31.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. Habitat loss through riverbank erosion caused by power boat wakes has not been identified due to the relatively low level of power boat use. The department is **NEUTRAL** to the perceived social conflict between power boats and drift boats on the Kasilof River.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 231 – 5 AAC 56.122. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area.

PROPOSED BY: Robert L. Ball, Jr.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would prohibit fishing from a boat in the Kasilof River upstream of the Sterling Highway Bridge to the public boat ramp located near the outlet of Tustumena Lake from July 1 through August 15.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? In the Kasilof River drainage, upstream of Sterling Highway Bridge to the outlet of Tustumena Lake, fishing is open the entire year except for king salmon. King salmon 20 inches or greater in length may be taken from January 1- June 30 upstream of the Sterling Highway Bridge, and from January 1- July 31, downstream of the Sterling Highway Bridge

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? The area above the Sterling Highway Bridge open to fishing for anglers fishing from a boat would be closed for 15 days. The harvest of sockeye and coho salmon as well as for resident species may be reduced by an unknown amount. Portions of the Kasilof River corridor riverbank between the Sterling Highway Bridge and Tustumena Lake outlet is private

property. Therefore, it is possible that conflicts could arise between land-owners and the anglers who may stop to fish from shore. Incidental catch of and illegal fishing for king salmon would presumably decrease assuming king salmon cannot be targeted from shore thereby giving some protection to spawning king salmon. Enforcement of the current closure to king salmon fishing in this area would be simplified.

BACKGROUND: BACKGROUND: The Kasilof River supports both early and late run king salmon. King salmon returning to the Kasilof River prior to July 1 originate primarily from Crooked Creek, a Kasilof River tributary and are managed as early-run fish and. Late-run king salmon return during July – early September and originate primarily from the mainstem and to a lesser extent Crooked Creek. Late-run king salmon are thought to spawn from mid-August through September. There is no escapement goal for Kasilof River late-run king salmon. From 1996-2006 harvest estimated by the Statewide Harvest Survey has averaged 931 late-run king salmon. In 2005 the department began a late-run king salmon assessment program to estimate run-timing and spawning distribution. Information gained from 2005 allowed the department to add a mark-recapture phase to the program to estimate abundance of late-run Kasilof River king salmon in 2006-2007.

Recently angler effort above the bridge during August has resulted in some enforcement problems associated with anglers actively attempting to take king salmon in an area closed to king salmon fishing under the guise of fishing for coho salmon. Current regulations allow anglers to fish throughout an area where pre-spawning aggregations of king salmon are easily identified and are vulnerable to fishing. Typically on this section of the Kasilof River during July and August anglers are fishing for sockeye and coho salmon and to a lesser extent resident species. When fishing for coho salmon anglers use a terminal gear configuration (line weight, hook and bait size) similar to that used to fish for king salmon in the Kasilof River. Consequently, anglers may target king salmon in waters closed to king salmon fishing under the false pretext of fishing for coho salmon. Since these anglers use similar terminal gear for coho salmon and generally do not harvest king salmon, law enforcement has difficulty enforcing the king salmon fishing closure. Fishing effort in the upper Kasilof River is relatively low in July and early August, closing sections of the river would result in a loss of fishing opportunity for coho salmon and resident species.

A Federal subsistence fishery also takes place in Kasilof River waters within the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge from the outlet of Tustemena Lake downstream to the first set of rapids (Silver Salmon Rapids). In this fishery salmon may be taken by dip net or rod and reel. Seasons and harvest limits depend on the species. Specifically, king and sockeye salmon may be taken from June 16 – August 15. The harvest limit for king salmon is 10 per permit holder and 2 for each additional household member, while for sockeye the harvest limit is 25 per permit holder and 5 for each additional household member. For coho and pink salmon the season is June 16 – October 31 and harvest limits are the same as those for king salmon (10 per permit holder and 2 for each additional household member).

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department in **NEUTRAL** on this proposal however is supportive of its king salmon conservation attributes because it is consist with a principle of the board adopted policy for the management of sustainable salmon fisheries, that salmon stocks should be protected within spawning habitats and it helps to prevent illegal fishing activity.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 232 – 5 AAC 56.122. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area.

PROPOSED BY: Dave Richards

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow fishing from a motorized vessel in the Kasilof River drainage from January 1 – July 31.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? In the Kasilof River drainage downstream of the Sterling Highway Bridge, from January 1-July 31, a person may not sport fish from a vessel that has on board a motor that is more than 10 horsepower; from January 1 – July 31, a motor may be used only between the mouth of the Kasilof River and Trujillo's Landing, and only after fishing from the vessel has ceased for the day; a person may not deploy sport fishing gear from a vessel after a motor has been used to propel that vessel on the same day. Sport fishing from a power boat is allowed after July 31 downstream of the Sterling Highway Bridge and year-round upstream of the Sterling Highway Bridge.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would likely increase angler efficiency and harvest potential of king salmon by allowing power boat anglers the ability to fish each hole multiple times. Social conflicts may develop between power boat anglers and drift boat anglers due to crowding and competition for fishing areas. Drift boat anglers and shore anglers would be impacted because the preferred method of fishing for king salmon on the Kasilof River is from shore or from a drift boat.

BACKGROUND: Historically, throughout the 1970's and 1980's nearly all fishing conducted at the Kasilof River was from the shoreline. Beginning in the 1990's an increasing number of drift boats were used in the fishery. In 2002 the Board of Fisheries adopted regulations prohibiting fishing from a motorized vessel during king salmon season downstream of the Sterling Highway Bridge. This regulation was adopted in recognition of the predominance of the drift boat fishery and to address the growing number of anglers participating in the Kasilof River early-run king salmon fishery.

From May through July anglers fish for king and sockeye salmon while from August through September anglers fish for sockeye and coho salmon as well as resident species. Information separating out angling activity by motorized boats and non-motorized boats participating in the sport fisheries after July is not available. Observations by department staff suggests this fishery is comprised of primarily local anglers using predominantly drift boats although both motorized and non-motorized boats are present.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **OPPOSED** to this proposal and is **NEUTRAL** on the social conflict between power boats and drift boats. The Kasilof River king salmon fishery provides a diverse drift boat king salmon fishing experience that is unique to Southcentral Alaska anglers and unique to king salmon fisheries connected to the Alaska road transportation system. Regulations have been developed around the understanding or the harvest potential of the drift boat and shore fishery. Allowing fishing from power boats prior to August 1 would likely result in changes in fishing patterns, higher exploitation rates and substantial regulatory actions in the future to ensure management objectives can be achieved.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSALS 233 – 5 AAC 56.122. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area.

PROPOSED BY: Michael Craig

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow a person to sport fish from an anchored vessel in the area known as "The People's Hole" and identified by an ADF&G regulatory marker located near the mouth of Crooked Creek, downstream approximately 2,700 feet to an ADF&G regulatory marker located near the cutbank.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? In the Kasilof River drainage from January 1 to June 30, a person may not sport fish from an anchored vessel in an area from ADF&G regulatory marker located near the mouth of Crooked Creek, downstream approximately 2,700 feet to an ADF&G regulatory marker located near the cutbank.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would increase conflict between shore-based and drift boat anglers. It may also negatively impact shore fishing opportunity due to the displacement of shore-based anglers from the only major public shoreline fishing area available on the Kasilof River below the Sterling Highway Bridge. Displacement could possibly result in conflicts between private landowners and shore-based anglers who seek less crowded areas to fish from shore. This proposal may increase the harvest of king salmon by drift boat anglers.

BACKGROUND: Historically, throughout the 1970's and 1980's nearly all fishing conducted at the Kasilof River was from the shoreline. Beginning in the 1990's an increasing number of drift boats were used in the fishery. In 2002 the Board of Fisheries adopted regulations prohibiting fishing from a motorized vessel during king salmon season downstream of the Sterling Highway Bridge. This regulation was adopted in recognition of the predominance of the drift boat fishery and to address the growing number of anglers participating in the Kasilof River early-run king salmon fishery.

Growth in this fishery resulted in public access improvements at the Kasilof River that attracted both shore-based and drift boat anglers. Improvements at the Crooked Creek State Recreation Site attracted shore-based anglers to fish a section of river near the confluence of the Kasilof River and Crooked Creek. A Kasilof River public boat launch located approximately two river miles upstream from the recreation site attracted drift boat anglers. Conflict due to crowding between these user groups for limited fishing space became a social issue. Shore-based anglers sought to eliminate fishing from drift boats in this area because they felt they were being displaced from the river because this section offered the only public shore-based fishing access to the Kasilof River below the Sterling Highway Bridge.

To provide some parity in fishing opportunity given the very limited public access to sport fish from shore on the lower Kasilof River and to support a diversity of fishing experiences for the Kasilof River king salmon fishery the board reached a compromise with both user groups to allow fishing from vessels in the river section however prohibited sport fishing from an anchored vessel. This regulation became effective in 2002.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** due to the social aspects of this proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 234 – 5 AAC 56.122. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area.

PROPOSED BY: Robert L. Ball, Jr.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would increase the sockeye salmon bag limit to 6 fish per day and allow the department to increase the sockeye salmon bag limit to 12 per day and 24 in possession by emergency order.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? In the Kasilof River drainage, salmon, other than king salmon, 16 inches or greater in length, may be taken from January 1 –

December 31; bag and possession limit of three fish, of which only 2 may be coho salmon.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? An increase in the limit may result in an increase in fishing effort and inriver exploitation of sockeye salmon. This would make the bag and possession limits on the Kasilof River different from all other Kenai Peninsula Area waters.

BACKGROUND: The sockeye salmon bag and possession limit of 3 fish is a general provision for the entire Kenai Peninsula Area. Kasilof River sockeye salmon are harvested primarily by UCI commercial fisheries, as well as by the Kasilof River personal use set gillnet and dip net fisheries and to a lesser extent the inriver sport fisheries. The escapement of sockeye salmon is estimated by sonar at approximately river mile 8. The department manages Kasilof River sockeye salmon to achieve a BEG of 150,000 to 250,000. If the department projects that the escapement goal of sockeye salmon into the Kasilof River will be exceeded the department may increase sport fish bag and possession limits by emergency order as long as the total harvest under the increased bag and possession limit will not reduce the escapement below the escapement goal. In nine of the last ten years the escapement of sockeye salmon into the Kasilof River has exceeded the escapement goal. Consequently, the department, over several years has taken the inseason management action to raise the limit in the sport fishery from 3 per day and in possession to 6 per day and 12 in possession.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

CHICKALOON RIVER SALMON SPORT FISHERIES

PROPOSAL 235 - 5 AAC 56.122. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area.

PROPOSED BY: Vernon Porter

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would open the Chickaloon River to sport fishing for king salmon from May 1 through July 31. It would also establish an annual limit of one king salmon 20 inches or greater in length.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Chickaloon River is closed sport fishing for king salmon.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? An unknown number of king salmon would be harvested from the Chickaloon River. Participation would likely be small initially, but it could increase due to angler interest in fishing for king salmon. Access to fishing areas may be problematic.

BACKGROUND: The Chickaloon River originates from Swan Lake located in the Kenai Mountains. Nearly all of the drainage, except Swan Lake, which is within the boundary of the Chugach National Forest, is within the lowland wilderness unit of the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge. Several adjoining streams merge into the Chickaloon River before it flows to its terminus on the south shore of Turnagain Arm in Cook Inlet, approximately 12 miles south of Anchorage. These include Thurman, Mystery, East Fork, Scenic, Indian Fork, and Lonesome creeks.

Access to the drainage is restricted under Kenai National Wildlife Refuge regulations. Seasonal automobile access is via a very primitive road that is a natural gas pipeline easement trail that originates at mile 64 of the Sterling Highway, approximately 30 miles north of the city of Soldotna. This road is open only from August 9 – October 20. The primitive road is about 31 miles in length and terminates on the Chickaloon River flats. Access to the area is primarily for hunting purposes. Aircraft access is also restricted by USFWS regulations. Floatplanes may land only in the lower 6.5 miles of the Chickaloon River, while wheeled aircraft are prohibited from access except at four designated areas dispersed throughout the lowland wilderness unit.

Since the 1950's the Chickaloon River drainage has been sporadically surveyed by several government agencies to assess fish stocks. The drainage is known to support spawning and rearing king, sockeye, pink, coho, and chum salmon as well as several resident freshwater species. Distribution of spawning and rearing king, sockeye, pink and coho salmon are documented in the ADF&G anadromous stream catalog. The most comprehensive fisheries survey was conducted by the USFWS during 1984 and 1985. During these years the peak stream index count of adult king salmon was approximately 2,600 fish. King salmon are early-run fish that return in mid-May through June and spawn from late July – August. Estimates of sport harvest, catch, and effort are not available from the SWHS for the Chickaloon River drainage. In this survey, sport fishing statistics are estimated by location. Due to the small size of the sport fishing activity that may occur and the corresponding lack of returns from anglers who may fish there, no estimates of catch or harvest of any species have been reported for the Chickaloon River drainage. This indicates that little or no fishing effort occurs in the drainage.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. There is a lack of information on the Chickaloon River king salmon stock. Several small populations of king salmon are present in Cook Inlet, and abundance combined with limited information on population status preclude establishment of a viable king salmon sport fishery. The Chickaloon River is a similar situation.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

RUSSIAN RIVER SALMON SPORT FISHERIES

PROPOSAL 253 - 5 AAC 57.122. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Middle Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Charles Owen

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would prohibit sport fishing from a boat 100 yards upstream to 25 yards downstream of the Russian River Ferry Crossing on the Kenai River.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The use of outboard motors is prohibited year-round in the Kenai River, from the waters of Skilak Lake within on-half mile radius of the Kenai River inlet, upstream to the downstream edge of the Sterling Highway Bridge at the outlet of Kenai Lake. There is no regulation prohibiting sport fishing from a boat in these waters.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? If adopted anglers would have to reel in their lines while floating through a 125 yard section of river. It is uncertain whether or not this would reduce the potential for an accident to occur between a drift boat and the Russian River ferry.

BACKGROUND: The Russian River ferry operation is contained within the boundary of the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge. A ferry operation to transport the public to settlement sites on the south bank of the Kenai River predates the 1941 establishment of the refuge. In 1949 the refuge issued the first permit to operate a ferry near the Kenai – Russian rivers confluence. The ferry has been operated under private contract for the refuge's visitor services program for the past several decades to transport refuge visitors across the Kenai River to access the south bank of the Kenai River and the lower Russian River. Two public boat launches upstream of the ferry crossing at Cooper Landing and Sportsman's Landing provide access for anglers to drift and to fish from a boat in the drift area of the Kenai River. The drift only area begins near the Kenai Lake outlet at about river mile 80 and extends downstream to river mile 65 at the Skilak Lake inlet. The majority of boats passing through the ferry crossing area do not stop. During the mid-point of the early and late-runs of sockeye salmon to the Russian River numerous rafts and drift boats pass through this area daily throughout the fishing season. The ferry operates from June 11 through Labor Day when it closes for winter. Typically, ferry crossings and shoreline fishing declines dramatically when the area closes to the retention of sockeye salmon after August 20. No record of the number of ferry – drift boat accidents at the Russian River ferry area is available.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. Adoption of this proposal will not lessen the number of boats passing through the ferry crossing area

that may potentially collide with the ferry while it is transiting across the Kenai River. Many of the boats drifting downstream do not stop in this area.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 254 - 5 AAC 57.122. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Middle Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area

PROPOSED BY: Jack Storer

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would establish a youth only fishing area downstream of the Russian River ferry crossing on the Kenai River.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Department of the Interior 50 CFR Part 36 for public use and access on Kenai National Wildlife Refuge. §36.39(i)(6): Fishing is prohibited June 1 to August 15, on the south bank of the Kenai River from the Kenai-Russian River Ferry dock to a point 100 feet downstream.

The Board of Fisheries may adopt regulations establishing restricted seasons and areas necessary for persons under 16 years of age to participate in sport fishing.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? If adopted, this regulation would conflict with a federal regulation that currently prohibits sport fishing in this area. If the board were to adopt a regulation creating a youth fishery in an area outside of the federally closed waters, it would provide anglers under 16 years of age an area where they could fish unimpeded by competition from adults. Adults would be excluded from this area and, depending on how large of a youth area is established, it could exacerbate crowding outside of the youth area

BACKGROUND: The Russian River ferry has been in service to transport sport anglers across the Kenai River to access the south bank of the Kenai River and the lower Russian River for many years. Federal regulations closed the shoreline 100 feet below the ferry dock to fishing in 1986 for safety reasons. From a point 100 feet below the ferry dock extending downstream there are two areas with restricted access to the public for fishing including a: 1) wheelchair only, and 2) mobility impaired only, It is uncertain what year the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge asserted claims of jurisdiction over angler restrictions on refuge lands limiting access to anglers at these two areas. During the 2005 fishing season, the Russian River ferry operator posted signs to create a third area opened only children 11 and under. This occurred only one season and was done without any state or federal authority.

In April of 2004, the Alaska Legislature passed HB 98 giving the board authority to establish restricted seasons and areas necessary for persons under 16 years of age to

participate in sport fishing. Since then, the board has established youth-only fisheries on Campbell Creek in Anchorage, First Lake and the Seward Lagoon in Seward, and the Nick Dudiak Fishing Lagoon in Homer. These youth-only fisheries occur only for a day or two during the peak of salmon runs or after a lake is stocked.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal because the designated area below the Russian River ferry crossing is not legally authorized under the provisions of ANICLA or under preceding federal regulations. The department is however **SUPPORTIVE** of establishing youth-only fisheries around the state.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

KENAI RIVER KING SALMON SPORT FISHERIES

PROPOSAL 255 - 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai River Sportfishing Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would establish a new bag limit for king salmon 20 inches or greater in length on the Kenai River. The bag and possession limit would be two fish, of which only one may be greater than 20 inches in length but less than 28 inches in length and one may be 28 inches or greater in length. In addition, there would be no annual limit for king salmon greater than 20 inches in length but less than 28 inches in length

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? In waters open to king salmon sport fishing, early-run regulations allow for the harvest of 10 king salmon less than 20 inches per day and harvest of one king salmon per day 20 inches or greater in length and less than 44 inches or 55 inches or greater in length. Any king salmon caught that is 44 inches or longer but less than 55 inches must be released unharmed. The non-retention slot-limit is in effect from January 1 through June 30 in the Kenai River from the mouth upstream to the Soldotna Bridge and from January 1 through July 14 for those waters of the Kenai River from the Soldotna Bridge upstream to the outlet of Skilak Lake.

Late-run regulations are in effect from July 1 – July 31, below the Soldotna Bridge, and from July 15-July 31 upstream of the Soldotna Bridge. In waters open to king salmon sport fishing, daily bag limits are 10 king salmon per day less than 20 inches in length and one king salmon per day 20 inches or greater in length.

There is an annual limit of 2 king salmon 20 inches or greater in length from the Kenai River. King salmon 20 inches or greater in length must be recorded on the back of the angler's fishing license. Any king salmon harvested in the Kenai River that is 55 inches

or larger must be sealed by an authorized representative of the department within 3 days after harvest.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? If adopted, this proposal would increase harvest opportunity and the exploitation of Kenai River king salmon. Increased harvests may increase the likelihood of in-season restrictions.

BACKGROUND: Prior to 1999, no more than five king salmon 16" or greater in length could be harvested from Cook Inlet fresh and salt waters annually, of which no more than two could be taken from the Kenai River. Harvested king salmon 16" or greater in length had to be recorded on the back of an angler's fishing license. Harvest and recording requirements were changed by the BOF at the 1999 UCI meeting to apply to king salmon 20" or more in length in all Cook Inlet waters.

Nearly all king salmon less than 28" in total length are age 1.1 or 1.2 king salmon. Most age 1.1 king salmon are 20" or less in total length, while age 1.2 fish range from approximately 17" to 34" in total length.

Significant changes to the management of the early-run king salmon fishery that have occurred recently include: 1) implementation of the 44"-55" slot limit in 2003, and 2) establishment of an OEG of 5,300 to 9,000 king salmon in 2005. Prior to 2005 the early-run was managed to achieve a BEG of 7,200 to 14,400 king salmon. The estimated escapement of early-run king salmon has exceeded the upper goal range since its implementation (2005-2007) despite being liberalized inseason by emergency order allowing the use of bait. The late-run is managed to achieve a BEG of 17,800 to 35,700 king salmon. Since 2005 the estimated escapements for the late run have been within the BEG range.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. Harvest opportunity for one ocean "jack" king salmon was increased by the board eight years ago, when the board raised the minimum length for the recording requirement, from 16" to 20". This proposal may change the prosecution of Kenai River king salmon fisheries by requiring a reduction of harvest opportunity for king salmon over 28 inches to ensure adequate spawning escapement when the numbers of king salmon in the returns may be below average. The department views this regulation as a liberalization that would promote the selective harvest of 2-ocean king salmon. This concern is greater for the late-run because 2-ocean fish typically comprise on average less than 20% of total return and are exploited in the marine commercial and inriver recreational (sport and personal use) fisheries.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 256 - 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: James Karl Johnson

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would eliminate the bag limits for king salmon less than 28 inches in length.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? In waters open to king salmon sport fishing, early-run regulations allow for the harvest of 10 king salmon less than 20 inches per day and harvest of one king salmon per day 20 inches or greater in length and less than 44 inches or 55 inches or greater in length. Any king salmon caught that is 44 inches or longer but less than 55 inches must be released unharmed. The non-retention slot-limit is in effect from January 1 through June 30 in the Kenai River from the mouth upstream to the Soldotna Bridge and from January 1 through July 14 for those waters of the Kenai River from the Soldotna Bridge upstream to the outlet of Skilak Lake.

Late-run regulations are in effect from July 1 – July 31, below the Soldotna Bridge, and from July 15-July 31 upstream of the Soldotna Bridge. In waters open to king salmon sport fishing, daily bag limits are 10 king salmon per day less than 20 inches in length and one king salmon per day 20 inches or greater in length.

There is an annual limit of 2 king salmon 20 inches or greater in length from the Kenai River. King salmon 20 inches or greater in length must be recorded on the back of the angler's fishing license. Any king salmon harvested in the Kenai River that is 55 inches or larger must be sealed by an authorized representative of the department within 3 days after harvest.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? If adopted, this proposal would increase the exploitation of Kenai River king salmon. Increased harvests may increase the likelihood of in-season restrictions.

BACKGROUND: Prior to 1999, no more than five king salmon 16" or greater in length could be harvested from Cook Inlet fresh and salt waters annually, of which no more than two could be taken from the Kenai River. Harvested king salmon 16" or greater in length had to be recorded on the back of an angler's fishing license. Harvest and recording requirements were changed by the BOF at the 1999 UCI meeting to apply to king salmon 20" or more in length in all Cook Inlet waters.

Nearly all king salmon less than 28" in total length are age 1.1 or 1.2 king salmon. Most age 1.1 king salmon are 20" or less in total length, while age 1.2 fish range from approximately 17" to 34" in total length.

Significant changes to the management of the early-run king salmon fishery that have occurred recently include: 1) implementation of the 44"-55" slot limit in 2003, and 2) establishment of an OEG of 5,300 to 9,000 king salmon in 2005. Prior to 2005 the early-

run was managed to achieve a BEG of 7,200 to 14,400 king salmon. The estimated escapement of early-run king salmon has exceeded the upper goal range since its implementation (2005-2007) despite being liberalized inseason by emergency order allowing the use of bait. The late-run is managed to achieve a BEG of 17,800 to 35,700 king salmon. Since 2005 the estimated escapements for the late run have been within the BEG range.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. Harvest opportunity for one ocean "jack" king salmon was increased by the board eight years ago, when the board raised the minimum length for the recording requirement, from 16" to 20". This proposal may change the prosecution of Kenai River king salmon fisheries by requiring a reduction of harvest opportunity for king salmon over 28 inches to ensure adequate spawning escapement when the numbers of king salmon in the returns may be below average. The department views this regulation as a liberalization that would promote the selective harvest of 2-ocean king salmon. This concern is greater for the late-run because 2-ocean fish typically comprise on average less than 20% of total return and are exploited in the marine commercial and inriver recreational (sport and personal use) fisheries.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 257 - 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Robert Estes

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would establish new bag limits for king salmon on the Kenai River. Anglers would be allowed to retain one fish less than 30 inches in length per day with an annual limit of two king salmon. Anglers would also be allowed to retain one fish over 30 inches per day with an annual limit of two king salmon. The proposal would also maintain the current slot limit during the early run.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? In waters open to king salmon sport fishing, early-run regulations allow for the harvest of 10 king salmon less than 20 inches per day and harvest of one king salmon per day 20 inches or greater in length and less than 44 inches or 55 inches or greater in length. Any king salmon caught that is 44 inches or longer but less than 55 inches must be released unharmed. The non-retention slot-limit is in effect from January 1 through June 30 in the Kenai River from the mouth upstream to the Soldotna Bridge and from January 1 through July 14 for those waters of the Kenai River from the Soldotna Bridge upstream to the outlet of Skilak Lake.

Late-run regulations are in effect from July 1 – July 31, below the Soldotna Bridge, and from July 15-July 31 upstream of the Soldotna Bridge. In waters open to king salmon

sport fishing, daily bag limits are 10 king salmon per day less than 20 inches in length and one king salmon per day 20 inches or greater in length.

There is an annual limit of 2 king salmon 20 inches or greater in length from the Kenai River. King salmon 20 inches or greater in length must be recorded on the back of the angler's fishing license. Any king salmon harvested in the Kenai River that is 55 inches or larger must be sealed by an authorized representative of the department within 3 days after harvest.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? If adopted, this proposal would likely increase the exploitation of Kenai River king salmon. Increased harvests may increase the likelihood of in-season restrictions.

BACKGROUND: Prior to 1999, no more than five king salmon 16" or greater in length could be harvested from Cook Inlet fresh and salt waters annually, of which no more than two could be taken from the Kenai River. Harvested king salmon 16" or greater in length had to be recorded on the back of an angler's fishing license. Harvest and recording requirements were changed by the BOF at the 1999 UCI meeting to apply to king salmon 20" or more in length in all Cook Inlet waters.

Nearly all king salmon less than 28" in total length are age 1.1 or 1.2 king salmon. Most age 1.1 king salmon are 20" or less in total length, while age 1.2 fish range from approximately 17" to 34" in total length.

Significant changes to the management of the early-run king salmon fishery that have occurred recently include: 1) implementation of the 44"-55" slot limit in 2003, and 2) establishment of an OEG of 5,300 to 9,000 king salmon in 2005. Prior to 2005 the early-run was managed to achieve a BEG of 7,200 to 14,400 king salmon. The estimated escapement of early-run king salmon has exceeded the upper goal range since its implementation (2005-2007) despite being liberalized inseason by emergency order allowing the use of bait. The late-run is managed to achieve a BEG of 17,800 to 35,700 king salmon. Since 2005 the estimated escapements for the late run have been within the BEG range.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. Harvest opportunity for one ocean "jack" king salmon was increased by the board eight years ago, when the board raised the minimum length for the recording requirement, from 16" to 20". This proposal may change the prosecution of Kenai River king salmon fisheries by requiring a reduction of harvest opportunity for king salmon over 30" to ensure adequate spawning escapement when the numbers of king salmon in the returns may be below average. The department views this regulation as a liberalization that would promote the selective harvest of 2-ocean king salmon. This concern is greater for the late-run because 2-ocean fish typically comprise on average less than 20% of total return and are exploited in the marine commercial and inriver recreational (sport and personal use) fisheries.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 258 - 5 AAC 56.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area; 5 AAC 60.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Knik Arm Drainages Area; and 5 AAC 61.110. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Susitna River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Tim D. Hiner and David Richards

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would change the minimum size requirement for annual limits of king salmon in Cook Inlet freshwater fisheries. Annual limits on king salmon would apply to king salmon 25" or greater in length instead of 20" or greater in length.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? A total annual limit of 5 king salmon 20" or greater in length may be taken from fresh waters of Cook Inlet north of the latitude of Point Adam. Of these 5 total king salmon, no more than 2 may be taken from the Kenai River or Deep Creek.

King salmon 20 inches or greater in length that are removed from the water must be retained and recorded on the back of the angler's fishing license. Anglers may retain up to ten king salmon less than 20 inches in length per day from all Cook Inlet freshwater king salmon fisheries all year except in areas closed to king salmon fishing.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? If adopted, this proposal would likely increase the exploitation of Cook Inlet freshwater king salmon. Increased harvests may increase the likelihood of in-season restrictions. .

BACKGROUND: Prior to 1999, no more than five king salmon 16" or greater in length could be harvested from Cook Inlet fresh and salt waters annually, of which no more than two could be taken from the Kenai River. Harvested king salmon 16" or greater in length had to be recorded on the back of an angler's fishing license. Harvest and recording requirements were changed by the BOF at the 1999 UCI meeting to apply to king salmon 20" or more in length in all Cook Inlet waters.

Nearly all king salmon less than 28" in total length are age 1.1 or 1.2 king salmon. Most age 1.1 king salmon are 20" or less in total length, while age 1.2 fish range from approximately 17" to 34" in total length.

Significant changes to the management of the early-run king salmon fishery that have occurred recently include: 1) implementation of the 44"-55" slot limit in 2003, and 2) establishment of an OEG of 5,300 to 9,000 king salmon in 2005. Prior to 2005 the early-

run was managed to achieve a BEG of 7,200 to 14,400 king salmon. The estimated escapement of early-run king salmon has exceeded the upper goal range since its implementation (2005-2007) despite being liberalized inseason by emergency order allowing the use of bait. The late-run is managed to achieve a BEG of 17,800 to 35,700 king salmon. Since 2005 the estimated escapements for the late run have been within the BEG range.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. Harvest opportunity for one ocean "jack" king salmon was increased by the board eight years ago, when the board raised the minimum length for the recording requirement, from 16" to 20". This proposal may change the prosecution of Kenai River king salmon fisheries by requiring a reduction of harvest opportunity for king salmon over 25" inches to ensure adequate spawning escapement when the numbers of king salmon in the returns may be below average. The department views this regulation as a liberalization that would promote the selective harvest of 2-ocean king salmon. This concern is greater for the late-run because 2-ocean fish typically comprise on average less than 20% of total return and are exploited in the marine commercial and inriver recreational (sport and personal use) fisheries.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 259 - 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Robert L. Ball Jr.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would modify the current bag and possession limit on the Kenai River for king salmon 20 inches or greater in length. Anglers would be allowed to retain any hatchery king salmon 20 inches or greater in length, as identified by a missing adipose fin with a healed scar, in addition to the current limit of one wild king salmon per day. The hatchery king salmon must be recorded and would count against the angler's annual limit of five king salmon from the Cook Inlet region, but it would not count against the annual limit of two from the Kenai River.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? In waters open to king salmon sport fishing, early-run regulations allow for the harvest of 10 king salmon less than 20 inches per day and harvest of one king salmon per day 20 inches or greater in length and less than 44 inches or 55 inches or greater in length. Any king salmon caught that is 44 inches or longer but less than 55 inches must be released unharmed. The non-retention slot-limit is in effect from January 1 through June 30 in the Kenai River from the mouth upstream to the Soldotna Bridge and from January 1 through July 14 for those waters of the Kenai River from the Soldotna Bridge upstream to the outlet of Skilak Lake.

Late-run regulations are in effect from July 1 – July 31, below the Soldotna Bridge, and from July 15-July 31 upstream of the Soldotna Bridge. In waters open to king salmon sport fishing, daily bag limits are 10 king salmon per day less than 20 inches in length and one king salmon per day 20 inches or greater in length.

There is an annual limit of 2 king salmon 20 inches or greater in length from the Kenai River. King salmon 20 inches or greater in length must be recorded on the back of the angler's fishing license. Any king salmon harvested in the Kenai River that is 55 inches or larger must be sealed by an authorized representative of the department within 3 days after harvest.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would not have a measurable effect on harvest, as the occurrence of hatchery fish entering the Kenai River is very rare. Modifying fishing licenses to accommodate a hatchery fish category would be challenging and confusing to anglers.

BACKGROUND: The department currently stocks hatchery raised king salmon that are released into Crooked Creek, a tributary of Kasilof River. Salmon released in Crooked Creek can be identified by a missing adipose fin. Stocking levels prior to the year 2000 were 210,000 smolt. Stocking levels were reduced to approximately 105,000 fish annually due to concerns about straying to the Kenai River as well as other Kenai Peninsula streams. The occurrence of strayed hatchery fish from the Crooked Creek stocking program in the Kenai River is currently thought to be extremely low because no recoveries have been made recently via department king salmon assessment programs. Creel and test netting studies on the Kenai have determined that the occurrence of hatchery king salmon in the harvest and the inriver netting program is somewhere in the range of 0.002% prior to 2000. Since that time the number of hatchery king salmon occurring in the Kenai River is considered to be a rare event.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. The occurrence is rare and does not warrant a special regulation and harvesting requirement.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 260 - 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Nathan Corr

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would modify the annual limit for king salmon 20 inches or greater in length on the Kenai River. The hatchery king salmon must be recorded and would count against the angler's annual limit of five king salmon from the Cook Inlet region, but it would not count against the annual limit of two from the Kenai River.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? In the Kenai River, the annual harvest limit is two king salmon 20 inches or greater in length. King salmon 20 inches or greater in length that are removed from the water must be retained and recorded on the back of the angler's fishing license.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would not have a measurable effect on harvest, as the occurrence of hatchery fish entering the Kenai River is very rare. Modifying fishing licenses to accommodate a hatchery fish category would be challenging and confusing to anglers.

BACKGROUND: The department currently stocks hatchery raised king salmon that are released into Crooked Creek, a tributary of Kasilof River. Salmon released in Crooked Creek can be identified by a missing adipose fin. Stocking levels prior to the year 2000 were 210,000 smolt. Stocking levels were reduced to approximately 105,000 fish annually due to concerns about straying to the Kenai River as well as other Kenai Peninsula streams. The occurrence of strayed hatchery fish from the Crooked Creek stocking program in the Kenai River is currently thought to be extremely low because no recoveries have been made recently via department king salmon assessment programs. Creel and test netting studies on the Kenai have determined that the occurrence of hatchery king salmon in the harvest and the inriver netting program is somewhere in the range of 0.002% prior to 2000. Since that time the number of hatchery king salmon occurring in the Kenai River is considered to be a rare event.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. The occurrence is rare and does not warrant a special regulation and harvesting requirement.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 261 - 5 AAC 57.120(2)(a),(i). General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Andy Szczesny

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would eliminate the slot length limit for early-run king salmon in the Kenai River.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? In waters of the Kenai River open to king salmon sport fishing, early-run regulations allow for the harvest of 10 king salmon less than 20 inches per day and harvest of one king salmon per day 20 inches or greater in length and less than 44 inches or 55 inches or greater in length. Any king salmon caught that is 44 inches or longer but less than 55 inches must be released unharmed. The non-retention slot-limit is in effect from January 1 through June 30 in the Kenai River from

the mouth upstream to the Soldotna Bridge and from January 1 through July 14 for those waters of the Kenai River from the Soldotna Bridge upstream to the outlet of Skilak Lake.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would increase the harvest and overall exploitation of king salmon during the early run. Anglers would be allowed to harvest 5-ocean as well as those larger-sized 4-ocean fish currently protected by the slot limit. It may result in increased fishing effort by drawing those anglers that are discouraged from participating in the fishery due to the current slot limit.

BACKGROUND: Prior to 2003, there was no slot limit in the Kenai River king salmon sport fishery, anglers were permitted to harvest king salmon regardless of the total length of the fish. However, the department, along with the public, recognized a decline in larger, older-aged king salmon returning to the Kenai River during the early-run. Although the exact cause for the decline in older king salmon during the early-run is not understood, the selective harvest of larger, 5-ocean fish was the only practical factor that could be directly influenced by fishery managers. Therefore, at the department's request, the board adopted a slot-limit harvest restriction in 2002 of 40 to 55 inches. This restriction almost completely eliminated the harvest potential of 5-ocean fish, allowed the retention of a very rare record-sized fish, and allowed harvest of younger smaller fish. In 2003 the board adjusted the slot limit to 44 to 55 inches based on a department recommended slot limit of 45 to 55 inches to protect the larger, older king salmon returning to the Kenai River during the early-run as a precautionary response to the decline in 5-ocean fish in the age composition of the escapements within the returning early-run stock. At present the slot limit allows approximately 73% of the returning early-run stocks to be available for harvest. Under the slot size-limit restrictions, most (87%) of the 5-ocean fish are protected, while at the same time the slot limit protects about 40% of the 4-ocean fish in the return.

From 1986 – 1996 an average of about 5.6% (1,036 fish) of the early-run were 5-ocean fish. During 1997 – 2002 the average was about 2% (200 fish). From 2003 – 2006 the estimated return of 5-ocean king salmon during the early-run averaged 3% (569 fish) of the return. During 2003 – 2006, an onsite creel survey of the inriver sport fishery downstream of the Soldotna Bridge did not detect a harvest of 5-ocean king salmon. Preliminary estimates of the 2007 harvest by age class of early-run king salmon indicate that approximately 0.9% (25 fish) were 5-ocean king salmon.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. The slot limit regulation effects on inriver harvests have succeeded in almost completely eliminating the harvest of large-sized 5-ocean king salmon. In addition, the slot limit, in part along with several factors including: prohibition of bait during most of the return, a two king salmon annual limit, low angler participation, and average to above average early-run stock abundance, has resulted in a reduction in the total harvest rate of early-run king salmon. During 2005-2007 there have been surpluses in excess to escapement needs, but it is still prudent to prevent the overharvest of 5-ocean fish in the return. It is possible

with a modification of the lower end of the slot limit to achieve a small increase in harvest opportunity, while at the same time protecting most 5-ocean fish in the return.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 262 - 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Joshua Caleb Johnson

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would eliminate the slot limit for early-run king salmon in the Kenai River.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? In waters of the Kenai River open to king salmon sport fishing, early-run regulations allow for the harvest of 10 king salmon less than 20 inches per day and harvest of one king salmon per day 20 inches or greater in length and less than 44 inches or 55 inches or greater in length. Any king salmon caught that is 44 inches or longer but less than 55 inches must be released unharmed. The non-retention slot-limit is in effect from January 1 through June 30 in the Kenai River from the mouth upstream to the Soldotna Bridge and from January 1 through July 14 for those waters of the Kenai River from the Soldotna Bridge upstream to the outlet of Skilak Lake.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would increase the harvest and overall exploitation of king salmon during the early run. Anglers would be allowed to harvest 5-ocean as well as those larger-sized 4-ocean fish currently protected by the slot limit. It may result in increased fishing effort by drawing those anglers that are discouraged from participating in the fishery due to the current slot limit.

BACKGROUND: Prior to 2003, there was no slot limit in the Kenai River king salmon sport fishery, anglers were permitted to harvest king salmon regardless of the total length of the fish. However, the department, along with the public, recognized a decline in larger, older-aged king salmon returning to the Kenai River during the early-run. Although the exact cause for the decline in older king salmon during the early-run is not understood, the selective harvest of larger, 5-ocean fish was the only practical factor that could be directly influenced by fishery managers. Therefore, at the department's request, the board adopted a slot-limit harvest restriction in 2002 of 40 to 55 inches. This restriction almost completely eliminated the harvest potential of 5-ocean fish, allowed the retention of a very rare record-sized fish, and allowed harvest of younger smaller fish. In 2003 the board adjusted the slot limit to 44 to 55 inches based on a department recommended slot limit of 45 to 55 inches to protect the larger, older king salmon returning to the Kenai River during the early-run as a precautionary response to the decline in 5-ocean fish in the age composition of the escapements within the returning

early-run stock. At present the slot limit allows approximately 73% of the returning early-run stocks to be available for harvest. Under the slot size-limit restrictions, most (87%) of the 5-ocean fish are protected, while at the same time the slot limit protects about 40% of the 4-ocean fish in the return.

From 1986 – 1996 an average of about 5.6% (1,036 fish) of the early-run were 5-ocean fish. During 1997 – 2002 the average was about 2% (200 fish). From 2003 – 2006 the estimated return of 5-ocean king salmon during the early-run averaged 3% (569 fish) of the return. During 2003 – 2006, an onsite creel survey of the inriver sport fishery downstream of the Soldotna Bridge did not detect a harvest of 5-ocean king salmon. Preliminary estimates of the 2007 harvest by age class of early-run king salmon indicate that approximately 0.9% (25 fish) were 5-ocean king salmon.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. The slot limit regulation effects on inriver harvests have succeeded in almost completely eliminating the harvest of large-sized 5-ocean king salmon. In addition, the slot limit, in part along with several factors including: prohibition of bait during most of the return, a two king salmon annual limit, low angler participation, and average to above average early-run stock abundance, has resulted in a reduction in the total harvest rate of early-run king salmon. During 2005-2007 there have been surpluses in excess to escapement needs, but it is still prudent to prevent the overharvest of 5-ocean fish in the return. It is possible with a modification of the lower end of the slot limit to achieve a small increase in harvest opportunity, while at the same time protecting most 5-ocean fish in the return.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 263 - 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai River Fishermen's Coalition

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would extend the season ending date for the slot limit for early-run king salmon on the Kenai River above the Soldotna Bridge from July 14 to July 31.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? In waters of the Kenai River open to king salmon sport fishing, early-run regulations allow for the harvest of 10 king salmon less than 20 inches per day and harvest of one king salmon per day 20 inches or greater in length and less than 44 inches or 55 inches or greater in length. Any king salmon caught that is 44 inches or longer but less than 55 inches must be released unharmed. The non-retention slot-limit is in effect from January 1 through June 30 in the Kenai River from the mouth upstream to the Soldotna Bridge and from January 1 through July 14 for those waters of the Kenai River from the Soldotna Bridge upstream to the outlet of Skilak Lake.

Late-run regulations are in effect from July 1 – July 31, below the Soldotna Bridge, and from July 15-July 31 upstream of the Soldotna bridge, bag and possession limit of one king salmon per day 20 inches or greater in length.

There is an annual limit of 2 king salmon 20 inches or greater in length from the Kenai River. King salmon 20 inches or greater in length must be recorded on the back of the angler's fishing license. Any king salmon harvested in the Kenai River that is 55 inches or larger must be sealed by an authorized representative of the department within 3 days after harvest.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would decrease the harvest and overall exploitation of large early run Kenai River king salmon that may be present in the Kenai River mainstem above the Soldotna Bridge after July 14. Angler effort may also decline in the fishery above the Soldotna Bridge because of the loss of harvest opportunity. Anglers who presently fish upstream may fish downstream of the Soldotna Bridge thereby contributing to crowding anglers into the lower river. This proposal would also result in an undetermined decrease in exploitation of large-sized late-run king salmon.

BACKGROUND: Prior to 2003, there was no slot limit in the Kenai River king salmon sport fishery, anglers were permitted to harvest king salmon regardless of the total length of the fish. However, the department, along with the public, recognized a decline in larger, older-aged king salmon returning to the Kenai River during the early-run. Although the exact cause for the decline in older king salmon during the early-run is not understood, the selective harvest or exploitation of larger fish 5-ocean fish was the only practical factor that could be directly influenced by fishery managers. Therefore, at the department's request, the board adopted a slot-limit harvest restriction in 2002 to protect the larger, older king salmon returning to the Kenai River during the early-run as a precautionary response to the decline in 5-ocean fish in the age composition of the escapements within the returning early-run stock. At present the slot limit allows approximately 73% of the returning early-run stocks to be available for harvest. Under the slot size-limit restrictions, most (87%) of the 5-ocean fish are protected, while at the same time the slot limit protects about 40% of the 4-ocean fish in the return.

From 1986 – 1996 an average of about 5.6% (1,036 fish) of the early-run return were 5-ocean fish. During 1997 – 2002 the average was about 2% (200 fish). From 2003 – 2006 the estimated return of 5-ocean king salmon during the early-run averaged 3% (569 fish) of the return.

A decline in 5-ocean king salmon returning to the Kenai River during the late-run is not, at present, a biological concern for the department. Data from the sport fishery and the inriver netting program, indicates that the age-class and size composition of the late-run return and escapement is relatively stable and within the bounds experienced during the past 19 years.

Information gathered during tagging and radio-telemetry studies conducted by the department and other resource agencies indicate that early-run king salmon primarily spawn in the tributaries of the Kenai River, such as the Funny and Killey rivers as well as other tributaries such as Benjamin, Slikok, Beaver creeks. Furthermore, a much smaller percentage of early-run fish were thought to spawn in various reaches of the mainstem below Skilak Lake. Distribution of the early-run return to these various spawning areas is not estimated annually nor is the number of 5-ocean fish present in the mainstem from July 15 through July 31. From 2003 – 2007 the estimated return of 5-ocean king salmon during the early-run averaged 569 fish and ranged from approximately 129 fish in 2003 to 865 fish in 2006. From June 21 – July 31, 2007, no 5-ocean king salmon were detected in a sample of 131 king salmon harvested in the sport fishery from the Soldotna Bridge upstream to Skilak Lake.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. The early-run is currently managed to achieve an OEG of 5,300 to 9,000 king salmon. The department liberalized the fishery in 2005-2007 to allow bait in an attempt to contain escapement within the escapement goal, however the estimated escapement goal of early-run king salmon was exceeded each year. Therefore additional restrictions for the early-run king salmon sport fishery are viewed as unnecessary at this time.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 264 - 5 AAC 57.121. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Francis V. Estalilla, M.D.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would extend the season ending date that the slot limit for early-run king salmon on the Kenai River would apply to below the Soldotna Bridge from June 30 to July 14.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? In waters of the Kenai River open to king salmon sport fishing, early-run regulations allow for the harvest of 10 king salmon less than 20 inches per day and harvest of one king salmon per day 20 inches or greater in length and less than 44 inches or 55 inches or greater in length. Any king salmon caught that is 44 inches or longer but less than 55 inches must be released unharmed. The non-retention slot-limit is in effect from January 1 through June 30 in the Kenai River from the mouth upstream to the Soldotna Bridge and from January 1 through July 14 for those waters of the Kenai River from the Soldotna Bridge upstream to the outlet of Skilak Lake.

Late-run regulations are in effect from July 1 – July 31, below the Soldotna Bridge, and from July 15-July 31 upstream of the Soldotna bridge, bag and possession limit of one king salmon per day 20 inches or greater in length.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would decrease harvest opportunity for large-sized late-run king salmon over 50% of the time the river is open to fishing for late-run king salmon. This proposal would also decrease the harvest of late-run king salmon by an unknown amount.

BACKGROUND: Prior to 2003, there was no slot limit in the Kenai River king salmon sport fishery, anglers were permitted to harvest king salmon regardless of the total length of the fish. However, the department, along with the public, recognized a decline in larger, older-aged king salmon returning to the Kenai River during the early-run. Although the exact cause for the decline in older king salmon during the early-run is not understood, the selective harvest or exploitation of larger fish 5-ocean fish was the only practical factor that could be directly influenced by fishery managers. Therefore, at the department's request, the board adopted a slot-limit harvest restriction in 2002 to protect the larger, older king salmon returning to the Kenai River during the early-run as a precautionary response to the decline in 5-ocean fish in the age composition of the escapements within the returning early-run stock. At present the slot limit allows approximately 73% of the returning early-run stocks to be available for harvest. Under the slot size-limit restrictions, most (87%) of the 5-ocean fish are protected, while at the same time the slot limit protects about 40% of the 4-ocean fish in the return.

From 1986 – 1996 an average of about 5.6% (1,036 fish) of the early-run return were 5-ocean fish. During 1997 – 2002 the average was about 2% (200 fish). From 2003 – 2006 the estimated return of 5-ocean king salmon during the early-run averaged 3% (569 fish) of the return.

A decline in 5-ocean king salmon returning to the Kenai River during the late-run is not, at present, a biological concern for the department. Data from the sport fishery and the inriver netting program, indicates that the age-class and size composition of the late-run is relatively stable and within the bounds experienced during the past 19 years. The late-run is managed to achieve a BEG of 17,800 to 35,700 king salmon. Recently, from 2005-2007 the estimated escapements for the late run have been within the BEG range.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. Data from a previous study has shown that 81% of radio-tagged king salmon that entered the Kenai River before July 1 were tributary spawners and 94% entered tributary streams by July 15. However, 19% of radio-tagged king salmon that entered the Kenai River before July 1 were mainstem spawners with roughly 73% of mainstem spawning occurring upstream of the Soldotna Bridge.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 265 - 5 AAC 57.120(2)(A). General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would prohibit anglers from possessing a king salmon that has been filleted, headed, mutilated, or otherwise disfigured in a manner that prevents determination of the length of the fish from January 1 to July 14 on the Kenai River, until the fish is permanently offloaded from a vessel or from the fishing site if it was taken from the riverbank.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? There are no regulations prohibiting an angler from filleting or cutting a king salmon prior to offloading a fish or leaving a fishing site.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal is housekeeping in nature to allow involved agencies the means to effectively conduct enforcement and research of king salmon harvested during the slot limit.

BACKGROUND: For the past 5 years the department has issued emergency orders at the beginning of the early-run king salmon fishery restricting the disfigurement of king salmon to facilitate enforcement of the slot limit and gather biological information on king salmon.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department submitted and **SUPPORTS** this proposal that is housekeeping in nature.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 266 - 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai River Professional Guide Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would restrict the use of bait on the Kenai River from January 1 to June 30, from the confluence of the Moose River to the outlet of Skilak Lake.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The use of bait while sport fishing in the mainstem of the Kenai River from its mouth upstream to the outlet of Skilak Lake, is prohibited from January 1 – June 30, unless superseded by emergency order.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would prohibit the department from allowing the use of bait in the waters of the Kenai River from the confluence of the Moose River to the outlet of Skilak Lake through an emergency order. Although the department has not allowed the use of bait in this section of water during the early-run king salmon fishery, this proposal would eliminate that option in the future and reduce the department's emergency order authority.

BACKGROUND: Bait has traditionally been used to increase the harvest of king salmon. Allowing or restricting the use of bait is utilized as a management tool to increase or decrease harvest levels to meet established escapement goals.

The Kenai River and Kasilof River Early-run King Salmon Management Plan directs the department to manage the sport fishery targeting Kenai River early-run king salmon to achieve an OEG of 5,300 – 9,000 fish. If the department projects the spawning escapement will exceed the upper end of the OEG, the department may liberalize the sport fishery by allowing the use of bait from the mouth of the Kenai River upstream to Skilak Lake. Since 2005, the early-run king salmon fishery has been liberalized allowing bait from the mouth of the Kenai River upstream to the confluence of the Moose and Kenai Rivers.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. By regulation bait is not allowed in this downstream of Skilak Lake unless superseded by emergency order to harvest king salmon surplus to escapement needs. Furthermore, reducing the flexibility in the plan would preclude fishery managers from liberalizing the fishery in the entire area open to king salmon when warranted.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 267 - 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Mel Erickson

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow the use of bait on the Kenai River starting on either May 1 or June 1 for the early-run king salmon fishery.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The use of bait while sport fishing in the mainstem of the Kenai River from its mouth upstream to the outlet of Skilak Lake, is prohibited from January 1 – June 30, unless superseded by emergency order.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would increase angler effort, harvest and exploitation of early run king salmon and may increase the potential for inseason restrictions or closure of the fishery.

BACKGROUND: Bait has traditionally been used to increase the harvest of king salmon. Allowing or restricting the use of bait is utilized as a management tool to increase or decrease harvest levels to meet established escapement goals.

The Kenai River and Kasilof River Early-run King Salmon Management Plan directs the department to manage the sport fishery targeting Kenai River early-run king salmon to achieve an OEG of 5,300 – 9,000 fish. If the department projects the spawning escapement will exceed the upper end of the OEG, the department may liberalize the sport fishery by allowing the use of bait from the mouth of the Kenai River upstream to Skilak Lake. Since 2005, the early-run king salmon fishery has been liberalized allowing bait from the mouth of the Kenai River upstream to the confluence of the Moose and Kenai Rivers.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. The liberalization of bait in the early-run king salmon fishery should be used as an inseason management tool based upon stock abundance rather than implemented at the beginning of a run prior to assessment of run strength.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 268 - 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai Area Fishermen's Coalition

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would extend the Slikok Creek, Funny River and Lower Killey River sanctuary closures through July 31 or the end of the king salmon season, whichever is later.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The following waters of the Kenai River are closed to sport fishing, as follows:

From January 1 – July 14, that portion of the Kenai River from an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately one mile downstream from the mouth of the Funny River, upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 200 yards upstream from the mouth of the Funny River, is closed to the taking of king salmon;

From June 25 – July 14, that portion of the Kenai River from an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately three-quarters of a mile downstream from the mouth of the Lower Killey River, upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately one-half mile upstream from the mouth of the lower Killey River, is closed to the taking of king salmon;

From January 1 – July 14, the waters in that portion of the Kenai River from an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 300 yards downstream from the mouth of Slikok Creek, upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker approximately 100 yards upstream from the mouth of Slikok Creek is closed to the taking of king salmon;

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would decrease the harvest and overall exploitation of early-run Kenai River king salmon that may be present in the Kenai River mainstem sanctuaries above the Soldotna Bridge after July 14 by an unknown amount. Angler effort may also decline in the fishery above the Soldotna Bridge because of the loss of harvest opportunity. Anglers that presently fish upstream may fish downstream of the Soldotna Bridge thereby contributing to crowding in the lower river. It would also result in an undetermined decrease in exploitation of late-run king salmon because more of the river will close to king salmon fishing.

BACKGROUND: The Board of Fisheries adopted the seasonally closed-water regulations which restricted the confluence areas of Slikok Creek, Funny River and the Killey River to fishing at the request of the department during the November 1996 meeting. Information gathered during tagging and radio-telemetry studies conducted by the department and other resource agencies indicate that king salmon entering the Kenai River in May and June primarily spawn in the tributaries of the Kenai River, such as the Funny and Killey rivers as well as other tributaries such as Benjamin, Slikok, Beaver creeks. Furthermore, a much smaller percentage of fish entering the Kenai River in May and June were thought to spawn in various reaches of the mainstem below Skilak Lake. Distribution of the early-run return to these various spawning areas is not estimated annually nor is the number present in the mainstem from July 15 through July 31. For management purposes, king salmon arriving in May and June are managed as early-run fish.

The same telemetry studies found that early-run king salmon can hold in these seasonally closed confluence areas of the mainstem for some time into July before ascending tributaries to spawn. By July 15, 95% of Killey River spawners have left the mainstem holding areas for spawning areas. Similarly, by July 16, 95% of Funny River spawners have left the mainstem holding areas for spawning areas. All early-run spawners haves ascended these larger tributaries by July 21. Studies also indicated that all king salmon tagged during the early-run period prior to July 1 had migrated past the Soldotna Bridge by July 19.

Overall, it is not known whether or not 100% of the king salmon destined for these tributaries have exited the closed mainstem waters by July 15 however the fraction is small. In addition, it is not known how many king salmon spawn in these seasonally closed waters of the mainstem each year. Regardless of final location, spawning of all early-run king salmon is thought to peak in mid to late July. A weir operated in the Funny River about two miles upstream of the confluence of the Kenai and Funny rivers

during 2006 and 2007 indicated 84% in 2006 and 76% in 2007 of the total escapement to the Funny River had passed through the weir on July 15.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** the biological aspects of this proposal as a conservation measure and is **NEUTRAL** on the social aspects. This proposal would further reduce angling opportunity in specific tributary locations of the Kenai River that are at present very conservatively managed. Current regulations provide adequate seasonal protection of those stocks that are holding in the tributary confluence areas prior to the fish leaving the mainstem and entering the tributaries to spawn. Further restricting the already limited fishing opportunities for these stocks is not biologically justified. In the Kenai River, the primary protection for mainstem spawning king salmon is the season closure date of August 1.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 269 - 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Andy Szczesny

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would extend the Slikok Creek, Funny River and Lower Killey River sanctuary closures through July 31. This proposal also seeks to extend the Killey River sanctuary upstream to include all three Killey River confluences with the Kenai River.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The following waters of the Kenai River are closed to sport fishing, as follows:

From January 1 – July 14, that portion of the Kenai River from an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately one mile downstream from the mouth of the Funny River, upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 200 yards upstream from the mouth of the Funny River, is closed to the taking of king salmon;

From June 25 – July 14, that portion of the Kenai River from an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately three-quarters of a mile downstream from the mouth of the Lower Killey River, upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately one-half mile upstream from the mouth of the lower Killey River, is closed to the taking of king salmon;

From January 1 – July 14, the waters in that portion of the Kenai River from an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 300 yards downstream from the mouth of Slikok Creek, upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker approximately 100 yards upstream from the mouth of Slikok Creek is closed to the taking of king salmon;

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would decrease the harvest and overall exploitation of early-run Kenai River king salmon that may be present in the Kenai River mainstem sanctuaries above the Soldotna Bridge after July 14 by an unknown amount. It would also decrease the total area of the Kenai River mainstem open to king salmon fishing by over two river miles. Angler effort may also decline in the fishery above the Soldotna Bridge because of the loss of harvest opportunity. Anglers that presently fish upstream may fish downstream of the Soldotna Bridge thereby contributing to crowding in the lower river. It would also result in an undetermined decrease in exploitation of late-run king salmon because more of the river will close to king salmon fishing.

BACKGROUND: The Board of Fisheries adopted the seasonally closed-water regulations which restricted the confluence areas of Slikok Creek, Funny River and the Killey River to fishing at the request of the department during the November 1996 meeting. Information gathered during tagging and radio-telemetry studies conducted by the department and other resource agencies indicate that king salmon entering the Kenai River in May and June primarily spawn in the tributaries of the Kenai River, such as the Funny and Killey rivers as well as other tributaries such as Benjamin, Slikok, Beaver creeks. Furthermore, a much smaller percentage of fish entering the Kenai River in May and June were thought to spawn in various reaches of the mainstem below Skilak Lake. Distribution of the early-run return to these various spawning areas is not estimated annually nor is the number present in the mainstem from July 15 through July 31. For management purposes, king salmon arriving in May and June are managed as early-run fish.

The same telemetry studies found that early-run king salmon can hold in these seasonally closed confluence areas of the mainstem for some time into July before ascending tributaries to spawn. By July 15, 95% of Killey River spawners have left the mainstem holding areas for spawning areas by ascending primarily the Lower and Middle Forks of the Killey River. Similarly, by July 16, 95% of Funny River spawners have left the mainstem holding areas for spawning areas. All early-run spawners haves ascended these larger tributaries by July 21. Studies also indicated that all king salmon tagged during the early-run period prior to July 1 had migrated past the Soldotna Bridge by July 19.

Overall, it is not known whether or not 100% of the king salmon destined for these tributaries have exited the closed mainstem waters by July 15 however the fraction is small. In addition, it is not known how many king salmon spawn in these seasonally closed waters of the mainstem each year. Regardless of final location, spawning of all early-run king salmon is thought to peak in mid to late July. A weir operated in the Funny River about two miles upstream of the confluence of the Kenai and Funny rivers during 2006 and 2007 indicated 84% in 2006 and 76% in 2007 of the total escapement to the Funny River had passed through the weir on July 15.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** the biological aspects of this proposal as a conservation measure and is **NEUTRAL** on the social aspects. This

proposal would further reduce angling opportunity in specific tributary locations of the Kenai River that are at present very conservatively managed. Current regulations provide adequate seasonal protection of those stocks that are holding in the tributary confluence areas prior to the fish leaving the mainstem and entering the tributaries to spawn. Further restricting the already limited fishing opportunities for these stocks is not biologically justified. In the Kenai River, the primary protection for mainstem spawning king salmon is the season closure date of August 1.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 270 - 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Ruth Marie Johnson

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would extend the Kenai River king salmon fishing season through August 7.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The open season for king salmon on the Kenai River is from January 1 – July 31. The department may, by emergency order, extend the king salmon sport fishing season up to seven days during the first week of August if the biological escapement goal is projected to be exceeded.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would increase effort directed for king salmon and increase the number harvested by an unknown amount.

BACKGROUND: The provision allowing the department to extend the king salmon season was first adopted into the Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan in 1992. Since that time, the department extended the king salmon sport fishing season below Eagle Rock during four different years between 1993 – 2001. The provision to extend the season was removed from the plan for the 2002-2004 seasons due to concerns of low abundance of coho salmon stocks throughout Cook Inlet. In 2005 the board removed some of the restrictions it placed on coho salmon fisheries, and readopted the provision to extend the king salmon season by emergency order. Season extensions have averaged about five days and the harvest during the extended seasons have averaged less than 200 fish.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. The increase in effort and harvest as a result of fishing later into August could lead to restricting the fishery prior to the end of July that would not have happened under the current approach. The department prefers to have the authority to extend the season by emergency order as a management tool to utilize in times of high abundance.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 271 - 5 AAC 21.359. Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Melvin Forsyth Jr.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would extend the Kenai River king salmon sport fishing season through August 10.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The open season for king salmon on the Kenai River is from January 1 – July 31. The department may, by emergency order, extend the king salmon sport fishing season up to seven days during the first week of August if the biological escapement goal is projected to be exceeded.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would increase effort directed for king salmon and increase the number harvested by an unknown amount.

BACKGROUND: The provision allowing the department to extend the king salmon season was first adopted into the Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan in 1992. Since that time, the department extended the king salmon sport fishing season below Eagle Rock during four different years between 1993 – 2001. The provision to extend the season was removed from the plan for the 2002-2004 seasons due to concerns of low abundance of coho salmon stocks throughout Cook Inlet. In 2005 the board removed some of the restrictions it placed on coho salmon fisheries, and readopted the provision to extend the king salmon season by emergency order. Season extensions have averaged about five days and the harvest during the extended seasons has averaged less than 200 fish.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. The increase in effort and harvest as a result of fishing later into August could lead to restricting the fishery prior to the end of July that would not have happened under the current approach. The department prefers to have the authority to extend the season by emergency order as a management tool to utilize in times of high abundance.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 272 - 5 AAC 21.359. Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Melvin Forsyth Jr.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would increase the minimum escapement goal level from 17,800 to 35,000 late-run king salmon into the Kenai River in July.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan states that the department shall manage the late run of Kenai River king salmon to achieve a biological escapement goal of 17,800 – 35,700 king salmon.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would reduce fishing opportunity for sport anglers to fish for king salmon dramatically as the department would have to manage to ensure an escapement of at least 35,000 king salmon thereby eliminating both sport and commercial fishing seasons in most years.

BACKGROUND: The estimated spawning escapement of late-run king salmon has exceeded 35,000 fish in just 4 of the past 22 years. Rigorous analysis of data has led to the development of a biological escapement goal (17,800 – 35,700) for Kenai River late-run king salmon.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department recommends **NO ACTION** on this proposal. The department, not the board, has the responsibility of establishing biological and sustainable escapement goals. The board, may establish an optimal escapement goal, if deemed appropriate, which considers biological and allocative factors and may differ from the BEG or SEG.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 273 - 5 AAC 21.359. Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: John Higgins

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would modify the Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan by (1) deleting the priority of the late run king salmon for sport and guided sport uses; (2) change the management action point for closing sport and commercial fisheries from an in-river return of 17,800 to an escapement of 17,800 king salmon; (3) exclude the Kasilof Special Harvest Area from closure to conserve Kenai River king salmon; (4) delete all provisions to restrict or close sport and commercial fisheries when the projected inriver return is less than 40,000 fish; and (5) delete the provision that exempts the Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan from actions taken in this plan.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan states that the department shall manage the late-run of Kenai River king salmon primarily for sport and guided sport uses. If the projected inriver return is less than 17,800 the department shall; 1) close the sport fisheries in the Kenai River and in the salt waters of Cook Inlet north of the latitude of Bluff Point to the taking of king salmon; 2) close the commercial drift gillnet fishery in the Central District within one mile of the Kenai Peninsula shoreline north of the Kenai River and within one and one-half miles of the Kenai Peninsula shoreline south of the Kenai River; and 3) close the commercial set gillnet fishery in the Upper Subdistrict of the Central District.

From July 20 to July 31, if the projected inriver return of late-run king salmon is less than 40,000 fish and the inriver sport fishery harvest is projected to result in an escapement below 17,800 king salmon, the department may restrict the inriver sport fishery; if the inriver sport fishery is closed, the commercial set gillnet fishery in the Upper Subdistrict shall be closed; Consistent with the purposes of this management plan and the Kenai River Late-run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan, if the projected inriver return of king salmon is less than 40,000 fish, the department may not reduce the closed waters at the mouth of the Kenai River. The provisions of the Kasilof River salmon Management Plan are exempt from the provisions of this section.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would remove prescribed management actions to be taken in both sport and commercial fisheries in order to meet the biological escapement goal. This may result in the sport fishery being closed while the commercial fishery remains open to fishing for sockeye salmon.

BACKGROUND: The Kenai River Late-run King Salmon Management Plan provides the department with several directives aimed to ensure sustained production of the stock including all users to share in the burden of conservation when warranted.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 274 - 5 AAC 21.359. Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Central Peninsula Advisory Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow an expansion of Cook Inlet waters open to commercial fishing near the mouth of the Kenai River regardless of the projected inriver return of late-run king salmon.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? If the projected in river return of late-run king salmon is less than 40,000 fish, the department may not reduce the closed waters at the mouth of the Kenai River for commercial fishing described in 5 AAC 21.350(b).

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Commercial exploitation of late-run king and sockeye salmon would likely increase. In years of low king salmon abundance and large sockeye salmon runs, this may result in the king salmon sport fishery being closed while the commercial fishery remains open to fishing for sockeye salmon.

BACKGROUND: The Kenai River Late-run King Salmon Management Plan provides the department with several directives aimed to ensure sustained production of the stock including all users to share in the burden of conservation when warranted. The closed waters at the mouth of the Kenai River have not been used since 1988.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 275 - 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Ted Wellman

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would limit the number of non-resident harvest permits or tags for king salmon on the Kenai River.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? There are no regulations that restrict the number of non-resident king salmon tags on the Kenai River.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would reduce fishing opportunity by non-residents and the harvest of king salmon by an unknown amount.

BACKGROUND: The department does not project the total allowable harvest of king salmon, rather the department develops a preseason forecast of the total return. Inseason projections of the inriver return are made daily and the projected escapement is made on a weekly basis or as requested by managers throughout the season.

Data collected by the statewide harvest survey indicates that on average more nonresident than resident anglers fish the Kenai River each year, however resident anglers account for the majority of total fishing effort. For example, from 2001 – 2006 the average number of anglers fishing the Kenai River each year was 146,021 of which 70,909 were resident

and 75,112 were nonresident anglers. Total angler days fishing effort was 413,020 of which resident anglers accounted for 223,235 angler days in comparison to 189,785 angler days for nonresidents. Over the same years (2001-2006) the Kenai River king salmon harvest averaged 17,248 fish. Harvest by nonresident anglers averaged 11,234 king salmon per year, while resident king salmon harvest averaged 6,014 fish per year.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. Although the board has no authority over the sale of licenses or stamps and limitations for sale of king salmon stamps to non-residents, the board may take other actions to effect change to the number of fish harvested by nonresident anglers.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 276 - 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Ted Wellman

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would establish annual limits of salmon for non-residents on the Kenai River. The annual limits would be 1 king salmon, 12 sockeye salmon, and 4 coho salmon per year.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The annual limit of king salmon on the Kenai River for both resident and non-resident anglers is 2 per year. There are no annual limits for sockeye and coho salmon for either resident or non-resident anglers.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Non-resident anglers would lose harvest opportunity of most salmon. The relative effort and harvest levels on the Kenai River for all salmon except pink salmon would likely decrease. Harvest opportunity for resident anglers would likely increase.

BACKGROUND: Data collected by the statewide harvest survey indicates that on average more nonresident than resident anglers fish the Kenai River each year, however resident anglers account for the majority of total fishing effort. For example, from 2001 – 2006 the average number of anglers fishing the Kenai River each year was 146,021 of which 70,909 were resident and 75,112 were nonresident anglers. Total angler days fishing effort was 413,020 of which resident anglers accounted for 223,235 angler days in comparison to 189,785 angler days for nonresidents. Over the same years (2001-2006) the Kenai River king salmon sport harvest averaged 17,248 fish. Harvest by nonresident anglers averaged 11,234 king salmon per year, while resident king salmon harvest averaged 6,014 fish per year. For the sport harvest of other salmon species from the Kenai River drainage, on average resident anglers account for 48% of the coho salmon sport harvest and 47% of the sockeye salmon sport harvest.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 277 - 5 AAC 57.124. Harvest record required; annual limits for the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: John McCombs

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would establish an annual limit of 125 pounds of fish per nonresident angler that could be exported from the state of Alaska.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? There are no regulations that limit the export of pounds of fish harvested in the Cook Inlet sport fisheries. Regulations require anglers to record the harvest of king salmon, rainbow trout, and sharks on the back on an angler's sport fishing license for sport fisheries that have established annual limits. These regulations do not differentiate between resident and nonresident anglers. Anglers are required to record date, species, and location of harvest.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted, nonresident anglers would be limited to exporting a total of 125 pounds of sport caught fish harvested in Cook Inlet. Adoption of this regulation could significantly reduce the nonresident harvest component of fish retained from the sport fisheries that take place in the fresh and saltwater of Cook Inlet.

A mechanism for enforcing such a limit would have to be established. An elaborate means of inspecting nonresident angler harvest would have to be developed which could include establishing check stations on major roads, border crossing stations, airports, freight shipping agencies, etc., where sport caught fish could leave the state. A determination of which agency or group of agencies that would be responsible for enforcing this limit would have to be determined.

BACKGROUND: Data collected by the statewide harvest survey indicates that on average more nonresident than resident anglers fish the Kenai River each year, however resident anglers account for the majority of total fishing effort. For example, from 2001 – 2006 the average number of anglers fishing the Kenai River each year was 146,021 of which 70,909 were resident and 75,112 were nonresident anglers. Total angler days fishing effort was 413,020 of which resident anglers accounted for 223,235 angler days in comparison to 189,785 angler days for nonresidents. Over the same years (2001-2006) the Kenai River king salmon sport harvest averaged 17,248 fish. Harvest by nonresident anglers averaged 11,234 king salmon per year, while resident king salmon harvest

averaged 6,014 fish per year. For the sport harvest of other salmon species from the Kenai River drainage, on average resident anglers account for 48% of the coho salmon sport harvest and 47% of the sockeye salmon sport harvest.

For all freshwaters of Cook Inlet from 2001 – 2006 resident anglers accounted for an average of 64% of the total fishing effort. Harvest of king salmon by resident anglers averaged 48% of the total king salmon harvest per year, while resident sport harvest of other salmon species from all Cook Inlet freshwaters was on average 59% of the total coho salmon sport harvest and 47% of the total sockeye salmon sport harvest.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department and the Alaska Wildlife Troopers **OPPOSE** the biological aspects of this proposal and are **NEUTRAL** on its allocative nature. Based on the average harvests of various species of fish for non-resident anglers it is likely that this regulation is not likely to result in allocation of more of the fishery resources to resident anglers.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

KENAI RIVER SOCKEYE AND COHO SALMON SPORT FISHERIES

PROPOSAL 278 - 5 AAC 75.022. Freshwater sport fishing.

PROPOSED BY: Dwight Kramer

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow anglers fishing in the Kenai, Kasilof and Russian rivers to retain sockeye salmon that are unintentionally snagged.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Statewide regulations state that it is unlawful to intentionally snag or attempt to snag any fish in freshwater. Fish unintentionally hooked elsewhere than in the mouth must be released immediately. “Snag” means to hook a fish elsewhere than in the mouth.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL ISADOPTED? This proposal would increase the harvest of sockeye salmon by increasing angler efficiency. The increased harvest could alter present allocations among commercial, sport, and personal use fishermen and could also attract additional participants. It could cycle more people through the fishery if anglers left the river after they have retained their limit and did not sort through their catch. It may not relieve crowding if more anglers were drawn to the area or if anglers continued to catch and release fish. Catch and release mortality of non-target species may increase by an unknown amount. It could promote illegal fishing practices by making enforcement of the current snagging regulation that prohibits intentional snagging difficult.

BACKGROUND: In 1964, the Board of Fish and Game prohibited the use of treble hooks on the Russian River in an effort to reduce snagging sockeye salmon, as it roughly accounted for 50% of the effort. CPUE data revealed both fly/snag methods had similar rates of success. In 1965, 61% of harvested sockeye salmon were snagged, and in 1966, 41% harvested were snagged. In 1965, the Board of Fish and Game adopted a flies-only regulation for the Russian River. In 1966, the Board of Fish and Game adopted an anti-snagging regulation. The goal was to create a more acceptable method of harvest, as the public expressed dismay to the unethical aspects of snagging. Information collected about the same time through the marking and release of snagged sockeye indicated nearly all fish hooked, landed, marked and released that were hooked elsewhere than the mouth survived to pass through the Russian River weir. Snagging has been prohibited in the fresh waters of Alaska since 1975.

In 2005 the board adopted a regulation requiring use of a single hook with a gap between the shank and point of 3/8 inch or less year round in those waters within a ½ mile radius of the Kenai River inlet at Skilak Lake extending upstream, including the flowing waters of the Russian River, to the outlet of Kenai Lake. This regulation has a beneficial effect of reducing the types of hooking injuries caused to incidentally hooked sockeye salmon as well as to resident species.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. It is unclear whether or not this proposal is advocating intentional snagging, or just the allowance of keeping unintentionally snagged sockeye. "Intent" is difficult to enforce, therefore incidents of intentional snagging would likely increase. The department is **NEUTRAL** on the allocative aspects of this proposal. Increasing the sport harvest of sockeye salmon is an allocation issue since the fishery is considered as fully allocated among various user groups.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal will result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 279 - 5AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai River Professional Guide Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would increase the limit for coho salmon in freshwaters of the Kenai Peninsula from two per day and in possession to three per day and in possession.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS: In the Kenai River Drainage Area the bag and possession limit for coho salmon 16 inches or greater in length is two fish, except in the Russian River, which is one fish.

WHAT WOULD THE EFFECT BE IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would increase the harvest of coho salmon and may increase exploitation rates to unsustainable levels during years of below average returns.

BACKGROUND: The Kenai River Coho Salmon Management Plan was first adopted in 1996 in response to a decline in coho salmon smolt abundance and increased harvest of returning adults in the Kenai River. A special Board of Fisheries meeting was convened in 1997 through a petition submitted by the department based on high Kenai River coho salmon harvests beginning in 1993 and 1994, which were thought to be unsustainable and declining Moose River (Kenai River tributary) coho salmon smolt counts. As a result of that meeting, restrictions affecting all users were put into regulation to conserve Kenai River coho salmon. Additional restrictive regulations were added to the plan from 1997-99. These regulations were an attempt to reduce the total harvest of Kenai River coho salmon by 20% from combined sport and commercial users and originally had a sunset clause of December 2002 and included:

1. The Kenai River coho salmon sport fishing season was established from July 1 – September 30.
2. Guides could not sport fish when guiding clients.

In 2000, a special Board of Fisheries meeting was convened through a petition submitted by the Governor based on low abundance of coho salmon throughout Cook Inlet. As a result of this meeting, more restrictions were put in place to conserve both Kenai River and Northern District coho salmon. The restrictions placed on the Kenai River coho salmon sport fishery from the 2000 board meeting included:

1. The bag and possession limit was reduced from 3 fish to 2 fish Cook Inlet-wide (excepting West Side Cook Inlet and terminal fisheries targeting hatchery fish). Anglers in the Kenai River must stop fishing for all species below the outlet of Skilak Lake for the remainder of the day after retaining a daily bag limit of 2 coho salmon.
2. Closing the Kenai River downstream of Skilak Lake from August 1-3 for coho salmon fishing.
3. Bait was prohibited in the Kenai River from October 1 to June 30.

The net result of the management plan on the Kenai River sport fishery was the overall reduction of coho salmon harvest. Currently the department does not manage the Kenai River coho salmon sport fishery in season based upon abundance as no escapement goal has been established for the Kenai River. There are no coho salmon escapement goals for the other streams in the Northern Kenai Peninsula Management Area where the limit for coho salmon was reduced from 3 daily and in possession to 2 daily and in possession.

Coho salmon fishing regulations were liberalized for the Kenai River by the Board of Fisheries in 2005. Changes resulted in a net gain in fishing time and area and also incorporated less restrictive fishing methods. Coho salmon fishing regulations for other Northern Kenai Peninsula Management Area streams were not changed. Several liberalizations allowed for the Kenai River coho salmon sport fishery included:

1. A 31 day season extension for coho salmon fishing within the Kenai River drainage: from September 30 to October 31.
2. Bait was allowed from July 1 through October 31 downstream of the Upper Killey River and bait with multiple hooks from August 1 through October 31 was allowed.
3. The August 1-3 coho salmon fishing closure downstream of Skilak Lake was repealed allowing a continuous season from July 1 through October 31.
4. The regulation prohibiting fishing after a person takes a bag limit of two coho salmon below Upper Killey River was reduced to below the Soldotna bridge allowing a person to continue to fish upstream of the Soldotna bridge.
5. Fishing from a guide vessel was allowed on Mondays for other species upstream of the confluence of the Moose and Kenai rivers.

The department is confident that a two coho salmon daily bag limit will provide a sustainable fishery despite changes in adult returns and juvenile survival. This is based on information gathered from ongoing research programs on the Kenai River that indicate the coho salmon returns averaged about 140,000 fish from 1999 to 2004 with harvests averaging just over 62,000 fish. Overall exploitation rates for Kenai River coho salmon were high (84%) under the previous Kenai River Coho salmon management plan that allowed a 3 fish bag limit, while under a plan that allows a 2 fish bag limit, exploitation ranged from 35% to 47% from 2000 to 2004. The liberalizations in 2005 are thought to have likely increased exploitation into the high 40% to low 50% range from 2005-2007. Research findings from studies conducted in Southeast Alaska with trans-boundary coho salmon stocks have indicated that an exploitation rate of about 61% is sustainable.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal because an increase in the bag limit will likely raise exploitation rates to unsustainable levels during years of below average returns. The department is **NEUTRAL** on the allocative aspects of this proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 280 - 5 AAC 56.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area; 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area; 5 AAC 59.122. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession and size limits, and methods and means for the Anchorage Bowl Drainages Area; and 5 AAC 60.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Knik Arm Drainages Area.

PROPOSED BY: David Richards

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would increase the limit for coho salmon in rivers of Cook Inlet from two per day and in possession to three per day and in possession.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS: In the Kenai Peninsula Area the bag and possession limit for coho salmon 16 inches or longer is two fish, except in the Russian River, which is restricted to one fish, and Kenai Lake drainages where coho salmon fishing is closed. In the Anchorage Bowl Drainages Area the bag and possession limit is 2 coho salmon 16 inches or longer, except in locations targeting hatchery coho salmon where the bag and possession limit is 3 fish. Similarly for the Knik Arm Drainages Area the bag and possession limit for coho salmon 16 inches or longer is two fish, except in the Eklutna Tailrace which is 3 per day and in possession.

WHAT WOULD THE EFFECT BE IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would increase the harvest of coho salmon and may increase exploitation rates to unsustainable levels during years of below average returns.

BACKGROUND: The Kenai River Coho Salmon Management Plan was first adopted in 1996 in response to a decline in coho salmon smolt abundance and increased harvest of returning adults in the Kenai River. A special Board of Fisheries meeting was convened in 1997 through a petition submitted by the department based on high Kenai River coho salmon harvests beginning in 1993 and 1994, which were thought to be unsustainable and declining Moose River (Kenai River tributary) smolt counts. As a result of that meeting, restrictions affecting all users were put into regulation to conserve Kenai River coho salmon. Additional restrictive regulations were added to the plan from 1997-99. These regulations were an attempt to reduce the total harvest of Kenai River coho salmon by 20% from combined sport and commercial users and originally had a sunset clause of December 2002 and included:

1. The Kenai River coho salmon sport fishing season was established from July 1 – September 30.
2. Guides could not sport fish when guiding clients.

In 2000, a special Board of Fisheries meeting was convened through a petition submitted by the Governor based on low abundance of coho salmon throughout Cook Inlet, restrictive action was taken on a wide geographic range (i.e., Anchorage, Kenai, Susitna River, Knik Arm, and parts of West Cook Inlet). Coho salmon restrictions were placed on both sport and commercial fisheries throughout most of the Upper Cook Inlet area. In the sport fishery, coho salmon limits were reduced from 3 fish per day to 2 fish per day. Possession limits were reduced from 6 to 4 in some areas, while in other cases, such as the eastside Susitna and Talkeetna River and Knik Arm drainages, possession limits were equal to the bag limit. The restrictions placed on the Kenai River coho salmon sport fishery from the 2000 board meeting included:

1. The bag and possession limit was reduced from 3 fish to 2 fish Cook Inlet-wide (excepting West Side Cook Inlet and terminal fisheries targeting hatchery fish). Anglers in the Kenai River must stop fishing for all species below the outlet of

Skilak Lake for the remainder of the day after retaining a daily bag limit of 2 coho salmon.
2. Closing the Kenai River downstream of Skilak Lake from August 1-3 for coho salmon fishing.
3. Bait was prohibited in the Kenai River from October 1 to June 30.

The net result of the management plan on the Kenai River sport fishery was the overall reduction of coho harvest. Currently the department does not manage the Kenai River coho salmon sport fishery in season based upon abundance as no escapement goal has been established for the Kenai River. There is no coho salmon escapement goal for the other streams in the Northern Kenai Peninsula Management Area where the limit for coho salmon was reduced from 3 daily and in possession to 2 daily and in possession.

Coho salmon runs to NCI waters improved and the BOF took action in 2005 to return the daily bag and possession limit to the original 3 per day/6 in possession along westside Susitna River tributaries, excluding Alexander Creek. The bag limits were not increased for high use areas such as the eastside Susitna River tributaries, the Talkeetna River drainage streams, and Knik Arm Drainages because these tributaries support relatively small returns, are road accessible and receive high angler use, thus are not able not be able to sustain an increase in harvest during years with average returns.

Coho salmon fishing regulations were liberalized for the Kenai River by the Board of Fisheries in 2005. Changes resulted in a net gain in fishing time and area and also incorporated less restrictive fishing methods. Coho salmon fishing regulations for other Northern Kenai Peninsula Management Area streams were not changed. Several liberalizations allowed for the Kenai River coho salmon sport fishery included:

1. A 31 day season extension for coho salmon fishing within the Kenai River drainage: from September 30 to October 31.
2. Bait was allowed from July 1 through October 31 downstream of the Upper Killey River and bait with multiple hooks from August 1 through October 31 was allowed.
3. The August 1-3 coho salmon fishing closure downstream of Skilak Lake was repealed allowing a continuous season from July 1 through October 31.
4. The regulation prohibiting fishing after a person takes a bag limit of two coho salmon below Upper Killey River was reduced to below the Soldotna bridge allowing a person to continue to fish upstream of the Soldotna bridge.
5. Fishing from a guide vessel was allowed on Mondays for other species upstream of the confluence of the Moose and Kenai rivers.

The department is confident that a two coho salmon daily bag limit will provide a sustainable fishery despite changes in adult returns and juvenile survival. This is based on information gathered from ongoing research programs on the Kenai River that indicate the coho salmon returns averaged about 140,000 fish from 1999 to 2004 with harvests averaging just over 62,000 fish. Overall exploitation rates for Kenai River coho salmon were high (84%) under the previous Kenai River Coho salmon management plan that

allowed a 3 fish bag limit, while under a plan that allows a 2 fish bag limit, exploitation ranged from 35% to 47% from 2000 to 2004. The liberalizations in 2005 are thought to have likely increased exploitation into the high 40% to low 50% range from 2005-2007. Research findings from studies conducted in Southeast Alaska with trans-boundary coho salmon stocks have indicated that an exploitation rate of about 61% is sustainable.

In northern Cook Inlet the westside tributaries support relatively large runs of coho salmon on good return years with relatively low associated harvest and use in comparison to the other stream with road access. Consequently the sustainability of coho salmon as a result of low returns to westside Susitna tributaries is less threatened by harvest than on eastside Susitna tributaries, Talkeetna River Tributaries and Knick Arm Drainages. The later areas are road accessible and receive high angler use, thus may not be able to sustain an increase in harvest during years with low or mediocre returns. Managers suspect a reduced return could occur in 2008, the result of a 100-year flood which occurred in August of 2006. Aside from angler reports, the department is limited in its ability to gauge inseason run strength on most tributaries. Therefore, making timely inseason management decisions, such as reducing the daily bag limit on a low return year to ensure adequate escapements are achieved, can be difficult.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal because an increase in the bag limit will likely raise exploitation rates to unsustainable levels during years of below average returns. The department is **NEUTRAL** on the allocative aspects of this proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 281 - 5AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession and size limits. and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Melvin Forsyth Jr.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Increase the limit for coho salmon in freshwaters of the Kenai Peninsula from two per day and in possession to three per day and in possession.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS: In the Kenai River Drainage Area the bag and possession limit for coho salmon 16 inches or longer is two fish, except in the Russian River, which is restricted to one fish, and Kenai Lake drainages where coho salmon fishing is closed.

WHAT WOULD THE EFFECT BE IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would increase the harvest of coho salmon and may increase exploitation rates to unsustainable levels during years of below average returns.

BACKGROUND: The Kenai River Coho Salmon Management Plan was first adopted in 1996 in response to a decline in coho salmon smolt abundance and increased harvest of returning adults in the Kenai River. A special Board of Fisheries meeting was convened in 1997 through a petition submitted by the department based on high Kenai River coho salmon harvests beginning in 1993 and 1994, which were thought to be unsustainable and declining Moose River (Kenai River tributary) coho salmon smolt counts. As a result of that meeting, restrictions affecting all users were put into regulation to conserve Kenai River coho salmon. Additional restrictive regulations were added to the plan from 1997-99. These regulations were an attempt to reduce the total harvest of Kenai River coho salmon by 20% from combined sport and commercial users and originally had a sunset clause of December 2002 and included:

1. The Kenai River coho salmon sport fishing season was established from July 1 – September 30.
2. Guides could not sport fish when guiding clients.

In 2000, a special Board of Fisheries meeting was convened through a petition submitted by the Governor based on low abundance of coho salmon throughout Cook Inlet. As a result of this meeting, more restrictions were put in place to conserve both Kenai River and Northern District coho salmon. The restrictions placed on the Kenai River coho salmon sport fishery from the 2000 board meeting included:

1. The bag and possession limit was reduced from 3 fish to 2 fish Cook Inlet-wide (excepting West Side Cook Inlet and terminal fisheries targeting hatchery fish). Anglers in the Kenai River must stop fishing for all species below the outlet of Skilak Lake for the remainder of the day after retaining a daily bag limit of 2 coho salmon.
2. Closing the Kenai River downstream of Skilak Lake from August 1-3 for coho salmon fishing.
3. Bait was prohibited in the Kenai River from October 1 to June 30.

The net result of the management plan on the Kenai River sport fishery was the overall reduction of coho salmon harvest. Currently the department does not manage the Kenai River coho salmon sport fishery in season based upon abundance as no escapement goal has been established for the Kenai River. There are no coho salmon escapement goals for the other streams in the Northern Kenai Peninsula Management Area where the limit for coho salmon was reduced from 3 daily and in possession to 2 daily and in possession.

Coho salmon fishing regulations were liberalized for the Kenai River by the Board of Fisheries in 2005. Changes resulted in a net gain in fishing time and area and also incorporated less restrictive fishing methods. Coho salmon fishing regulations for other Northern Kenai Peninsula Management Area streams were not changed. Several liberalizations allowed for the Kenai River coho salmon sport fishery included:

1. A 31 day season extension for coho salmon fishing within the Kenai River drainage: from September 30 to October 31.

2. Bait was allowed from July 1 through October 31 downstream of the Upper Killey River and bait with multiple hooks from August 1 through October 31 was allowed.
3. The August 1-3 coho salmon fishing closure downstream of Skilak Lake was repealed allowing a continuous season from July 1 through October 31.
4. The regulation prohibiting fishing after a person takes a bag limit of two coho salmon below Upper Killey River was reduced to below the Soldotna bridge allowing a person to continue to fish upstream of the Soldotna bridge.
5. Fishing from a guide vessel was allowed on Mondays for other species upstream of the confluence of the Moose and Kenai rivers.

The department is confident that a two coho salmon daily bag limit will provide a sustainable fishery despite changes in adult returns and juvenile survival. This is based on information gathered from ongoing research programs on the Kenai River that indicate the coho salmon returns averaged about 140,000 fish from 1999 to 2004 with harvests averaging just over 62,000 fish. Overall exploitation rates for Kenai River coho salmon were high (84%) under the previous Kenai River Coho salmon management plan that allowed a 3 fish bag limit, while under a plan that allows a 2 fish bag limit, exploitation ranged from 35% to 47% from 2000 to 2004. The liberalizations in 2005 are thought to have likely increased exploitation into the high 40% to low 50% range from 2005-2007. Research findings from studies conducted in Southeast Alaska with trans-boundary coho salmon stocks have indicated that an exploitation rate of about 61% is sustainable.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal because an increase in the bag limit will likely raise exploitation rates to unsustainable levels during years of below average returns. The department is **NEUTRAL** on the allocative aspects of this proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 282 - 5AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession and size limits. and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area; and 5AAC 57.170. Kenai River Coho Salmon Conservation Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Steve McClure

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would extend the coho salmon sport fishing season in the Lower Kenai River and Skilak Lake for one month through November 30.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS: The sport fishing season for coho salmon in the Lower Kenai River and Skilak Lake is July 1 to October 31.

WHAT WOULD THE EFFECT BE IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Extending the coho season for an additional month would increase coho salmon fishing opportunity by approximately 25% and likely increase exploitation by less than 1%.

BACKGROUND: The department has very little information to determine the effect of extending the coho salmon season into November. Given limited daylight, cold temperatures, low water, unfavorable river conditions, very low numbers of fish entering the river and advancing sexual maturity of coho salmon present that entered the river during the previous 3 months, exploitation beyond October would likely be less than 1%.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. It would provide additional fishing opportunity for coho salmon with nearly immeasurable impacts to the coho salmon stock.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 92 - 5 AAC 57.170. Kenai River Coho Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: John McCombs

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would eliminate the Kenai River coho salmon management plan.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS: The purpose of the Kenai River coho salmon management plan is to ensure an adequate escapement of coho salmon into the Kenai River drainage and to provide management guidelines to the department. The department shall manage the Kenai River coho salmon stocks primarily to provide sport and guided sport fishermen with a reasonable opportunity to harvest these salmon resources over the entire run. In the Kenai River Drainage Area the bag and possession limit for coho salmon 16 inches or greater in length is two fish, coho salmon fishing is closed from November 1 through June 30. From July 31 or the end of king salmon season, whichever is later through October 31, sport fishing from a registered guide vessel is restricted as follows: a sport fishing guide may not sport fish while a client is present; downstream from the confluence of the Moose and Kenai Rivers, sport fishing on Mondays is prohibited; upstream from the confluence of the Moose and Kenai Rivers, sport fishing for coho salmon on Mondays is prohibited.

WHAT WOULD THE EFFECT BE IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would primarily liberalize guided sport fishing effort and increase exploitation of coho salmon by allowing guides to fish while clients are present and allowing guided sport fishing on Mondays below the confluence of the Moose and Kenai Rivers.

BACKGROUND: The Kenai River Coho Salmon Management Plan was first adopted in 1996 in response to a decline in coho salmon smolt abundance and increased harvest of

returning adults in the Kenai River. This management plan contained provisions for managing coho salmon harvests for both the commercial and sport fisheries and was placed under the commercial fishing regulations contained in Chapter 21 of the Alaska Administrative Code.

In 2000, a special Board of Fisheries meeting was convened through a petition submitted by the Governor based on low abundance of coho salmon throughout Cook Inlet. As a result of this meeting, more restrictions were put in place to conserve both Kenai River and Northern District coho salmon.

Coho salmon fishing regulations were liberalized for the Kenai River by the Board of Fisheries in 2005. The management plan was restructured and moved to the sport fishing regulations contained in Chapter 57 of the Alaska Administrative Code. Changes resulted in a net gain in fishing time and area and also incorporated less restrictive fishing methods.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. This proposal was originally seeking additional fishing time for the commercial harvest of Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon. Eliminating the Kenai River Coho Salmon Management Plan will not accomplish that goal. The author may be unaware of the changes made to this management plan during the 2005 BOF meeting which removed the commercial fishing provisions.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

COMMITTEE F: Kenai River Sport Fishing Vessel Restrictions/Kenai-Kasilof River Guides (Total proposals: 47)

Kenai River Vessel Restrictions: 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301
Guides – Kenai & Kasilof Rivers: 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 327, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 328, 329

KENAI RIVER VESSEL RESTRICTIONS

PROPOSAL 283 - 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Warren Crawford

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would add an additional drift boat only day on the Kenai River for both guided and non-guided anglers, possibly occurring on Thursday in May June and July.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Downstream from the outlet of Skilak Lake, no one may fish from an ADNR-Parks registered guide vessel on any Sunday or Monday during May, June and July (except Memorial Day).

Downstream from the outlet of Skilak Lake, no one may fish from any motorized vessel on Mondays (except Memorial Day) during May, June and July. For purposes of this regulation, a motorized vessel is one that has a motor on board.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Fishing opportunity for power boat anglers would be restricted by an additional day. This proposal would reduce the level of participation in Kenai River sport fisheries, especially the early and late-run king salmon fisheries. Conflict related to issues such as; congestion on the river, hydrocarbon emissions, bank erosion, and poor quality of the angling experience could be reduced at the expense of king salmon harvest opportunity for anglers that fish from power boats. King salmon fishing effort and harvest would be lower initially. Effort and harvest may increase in the future if more anglers adapt to the new drift boat regulations.

BACKGROUND: An impressive number of seasonal and river-reach-specific boat fishing restrictions have been implemented over the past 20 years that address many of the issues described in this proposals. Prior to the 2002 season, fishing on Mondays in May and June was prohibited from any vessel. In February 2002, the board allowed fishing on Mondays from unguided non-motorized vessels. This proposal is asking for additional relief from erosion caused by boat wakes and hydrocarbon pollution caused by outboard motor emissions.

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Army Corps of Engineers have completed studies to better understand the effect of boat wakes on Kenai River channel morphology and also between boat hull design, engine horsepower, weight loading and the size and speed of the wake generated by the configurations of these variables. Results of these studies concluded that the Kenai River was maintaining a natural channel and that boats of v-hull configuration with heavy loads generated the largest waves as well as wave energy, while boats of flat-bottomed configuration produced small waves with less wave energy. In addition, it was concluded that increasing engine horsepower may slightly reduce wave size from boats of v-hull configuration.

A DNR regulation allowing the use motors of up to and including 50 horsepower in the Kenai River Special Management Area (KRSMA) where outboard motors are allowed is anticipated to become effective beginning in 2008. In addition, in 2008 and 2009 all power boats operating in the KRSMA during July would be required to use either four-stroke or direct fuel injection two-stroke motors. Beginning January 1, 2010 the DNR regulation would require all power boats operating in the KRSMA to use either four-stroke or DFI two-stroke motors the entire year. These new outboard motor type restrictions aim to reduce hydrocarbon concentrations in the Kenai River that have been in excess of the Department of Environmental Conservation standard of 10 parts per billion during peak use in July.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. The board has viewed drift boat only days as an allocative issue.

COST ANALYSIS: The department believes that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 284 - 5 AAC 57. 140. Kenai River guiding and guided fishing requirements in the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Todd Moore

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Add an additional drift boat only day on the Kenai River for non-guided anglers only on Thursdays in May June and July.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Downstream from the outlet of Skilak Lake, no one may fish from an ADNR-Parks registered guide vessel on any Sunday or Monday during May, June and July (except Memorial Day).

Downstream from the outlet of Skilak Lake, no one may fish from any motorized vessel on Mondays (except Memorial Day) during May, June and July. For purposes of this regulation, a motorized vessel is one that has a motor on board.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Fishing opportunity for power boat anglers would be restricted by an additional day. It would also reduce the number of days allowed for guided sport fishing downstream of Skilak Lake from 5 days to 4 days each week. This proposal would reduce the level of participation in Kenai River sport fisheries, especially the early and late-run king salmon fisheries. Conflict related to issues such as; congestion on the river, hydrocarbon emissions, bank erosion, and poor quality of the angling experience could be reduced at the expense of king salmon harvest opportunity for anglers that fish from power boats. King salmon fishing effort and harvest would be lower initially. Effort and harvest may increase in the future if more anglers adapt to the new drift boat regulations.

BACKGROUND: An impressive number of seasonal and river-reach-specific boat fishing restrictions have been implemented over the past 20 years that address many of the issues described in this proposals. Prior to the 2002 season, fishing on Mondays in May and June was prohibited from any vessel. In February 2002, the board allowed fishing on Mondays from unguided non-motorized vessels. This proposal is asking for additional relief from erosion caused by boat wakes and hydrocarbon pollution caused by outboard motor emissions.

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Army Corps of Engineers have completed studies to better understand the effect of boat wakes on Kenai River channel morphology and also between boat hull design, engine horsepower, weight loading and the size and speed of the wake generated by the configurations of these variables. Results of these studies concluded that the Kenai River was maintaining a natural channel and that boats of v-hull configuration with heavy loads generated the largest waves as well as wave energy, while boats of flat-bottomed configuration produced small waves with less wave energy. In addition, it was concluded that increasing engine horsepower may slightly reduce wave size from boats of v-hull configuration.

A DNR regulation allowing the use motors of up to and including 50 horsepower in the Kenai River Special Management Area (KRSMA) where outboard motors are allowed is anticipated to become effective beginning in 2008. In addition, in 2008 and 2009 all power boats operating in the KRSMA during July would be required to use either four-stroke or direct fuel injection two-stroke motors. Beginning January 1, 2010 the DNR regulation would require all power boats operating in the KRSMA to use either four-stroke or DFI two-stroke motors the entire year. These new outboard motor type restrictions aim to reduce hydrocarbon concentrations in the Kenai River that have been in excess of the Department of Environmental Conservation standard of 10 parts per billion during peak use in July.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: The department believes that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 285 - 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area.; 5 AAC 57. 140. Kenai River guiding and guided fishing requirements in the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai Area Fishermen's Coalition

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would add an additional drift boat only day on the Kenai River for both guided and non-guided anglers on Thursdays in May June and July. Guide boats on Thursday would be allowed to fish the entire 24 hours, with no time restrictions.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Downstream from the outlet of Skilak Lake, no one may fish from an ADNR-Parks registered guide vessel on any Sunday or Monday during May, June and July (except Memorial Day).

Downstream from the outlet of Skilak Lake, no one may fish from any motorized vessel on Mondays (except Memorial Day) during May, June and July. For purposes of this regulation, a motorized vessel is one that has a motor on board.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Fishing opportunity for power boat anglers would be restricted by an additional day. It would increase the allowable time guides can fish on the Kenai River by 12 hours. This proposal would reduce the level of participation in Kenai River sport fisheries, especially the early and late-run king salmon fisheries. Conflict related to issues such as; congestion on the river, hydrocarbon emissions, bank erosion, and poor quality of the angling experience could be reduced at the expense of king salmon harvest opportunity for anglers that fish from power boats. King salmon fishing effort and harvest would be lower initially. Effort and harvest may increase in the future if more anglers adapt to the new drift boat regulations.

BACKGROUND: An impressive number of seasonal and river-reach-specific boat fishing restrictions have been implemented over the past 20 years that address many of the issues described in this proposals. Prior to the 2002 season, fishing on Mondays in May and June was prohibited from any vessel. In February 2002, the board allowed fishing on Mondays from unguided non-motorized vessels. This proposal is asking for additional relief from erosion caused by boat wakes and hydrocarbon pollution caused by outboard motor emissions.

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Army Corps of Engineers have completed studies to better understand the effect of boat wakes on Kenai River channel morphology and also between boat hull design, engine horsepower, weight loading and the size and speed of the wake generated by the configurations of these variables. Results of these studies concluded that the Kenai River was maintaining a natural channel and that boats of v-hull configuration with heavy loads generated the largest waves as well as

wave energy, while boats of flat-bottomed configuration produced small waves with less wave energy. In addition, it was concluded that increasing engine horsepower may slightly reduce wave size from boats of v-hull configuration.

A DNR regulation allowing the use motors of up to and including 50 horsepower in the Kenai River Special Management Area (KRSMA) where outboard motors are allowed is anticipated to become effective beginning in 2008. In addition, in 2008 and 2009 all power boats operating in the KRSMA during July would be required to use either four-stroke or direct fuel injection two-stroke motors. Beginning January 1, 2010 the DNR regulation would require all power boats operating in the KRSMA to use either four-stroke or DFI two-stroke motors the entire year. These new outboard motor type restrictions aim to reduce hydrocarbon concentrations in the Kenai River that have been in excess of the Department of Environmental Conservation standard of 10 parts per billion during peak use in July.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: The department believes that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 286 - 5 AAC 21.359. Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Jim Richardson

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would add an additional drift boat only day on the Kenai River for non-guided anglers on Fridays in May June and July.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Downstream from the outlet of Skilak Lake, no one may fish from an ADNR-Parks registered guide vessel on any Sunday or Monday during May, June and July (except Memorial Day).

Downstream from the outlet of Skilak Lake, no one may fish from any motorized vessel on Mondays (except Memorial Day) during May, June and July. For purposes of this regulation, a motorized vessel is one that has a motor on board.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Fishing opportunity for power boat anglers would be restricted by an additional day. It would also reduce the number of days allowed for guided sport fishing downstream of Skilak Lake would be reduced from 5 days to 4 days each week. This proposal would reduce the level of participation in Kenai River sport fisheries, especially the early and late-run king salmon fisheries. Conflict related to issues such as; congestion on the river, hydrocarbon emissions, bank erosion, and poor quality of the angling experience could be

reduced at the expense of king salmon harvest opportunity for anglers that fish from power boats. King salmon fishing effort and harvest would be lower initially. Effort and harvest may increase in the future if more anglers adapt to the new drift boat regulations.

BACKGROUND: An impressive number of seasonal and river-reach-specific boat fishing restrictions have been implemented over the past 20 years that address many of the issues described in this proposals. Prior to the 2002 season, fishing on Mondays in May and June was prohibited from any vessel. In February 2002, the board allowed fishing on Mondays from unguided non-motorized vessels. This proposal is asking for additional relief from erosion caused by boat wakes and hydrocarbon pollution caused by outboard motor emissions.

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Army Corps of Engineers have completed studies to better understand the effect of boat wakes on Kenai River channel morphology and also between boat hull design, engine horsepower, weight loading and the size and speed of the wake generated by the configurations of these variables. Results of these studies concluded that the Kenai River was maintaining a natural channel and that boats of v-hull configuration with heavy loads generated the largest waves as well as wave energy, while boats of flat-bottomed configuration produced small waves with less wave energy. In addition, it was concluded that increasing engine horsepower may slightly reduce wave size from boats of v-hull configuration.

A DNR regulation allowing the use motors of up to and including 50 horsepower in the Kenai River Special Management Area (KRSMA) where outboard motors are allowed is anticipated to become effective beginning in 2008. In addition, in 2008 and 2009 all power boats operating in the KRSMA during July would be required to use either four-stroke or direct fuel injection two-stroke motors. Beginning January 1, 2010 the DNR regulation would require all power boats operating in the KRSMA to use either four-stroke or DFI two-stroke motors the entire year. These new outboard motor type restrictions aim to reduce hydrocarbon concentrations in the Kenai River that have been in excess of the Department of Environmental Conservation standard of 10 parts per billion during peak use in July.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: The department believes that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 287 - 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Roland Maw

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would add an additional drift boat only day on the Kenai River for both guided and non-guided anglers on Tuesdays from Skilak Lake downstream to the Soldotna Bridge in May June and July.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Downstream from the outlet of Skilak Lake, no one may fish from an ADNR-Parks registered guide vessel on any Sunday or Monday during May, June and July (except Memorial Day).

Downstream from the outlet of Skilak Lake, no one may fish from any motorized vessel on Mondays (except Memorial Day) during May, June and July. For purposes of this regulation, a motorized vessel is one that has a motor on board.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Fishing opportunity for power boat anglers would be restricted by an additional day. This proposal would reduce the level of participation in Kenai River sport fisheries, especially the early and late-run king salmon fisheries. Conflict related to issues such as; congestion on the river, hydrocarbon emissions, bank erosion, and poor quality of the angling experience could be reduced at the expense of king salmon harvest opportunity for anglers that fish from power boats. King salmon fishing effort and harvest would be lower initially. Effort and harvest may increase in the future if more anglers adapt to the new drift boat regulations.

BACKGROUND: An impressive number of seasonal and river-reach-specific boat fishing restrictions have been implemented over the past 20 years that address many of the issues described in this proposals. Prior to the 2002 season, fishing on Mondays in May and June was prohibited from any vessel. In February 2002, the board allowed fishing on Mondays from unguided non-motorized vessels. This proposal is asking for additional relief from erosion caused by boat wakes and hydrocarbon pollution caused by outboard motor emissions.

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Army Corps of Engineers have completed studies to better understand the effect of boat wakes on Kenai River channel morphology and also between boat hull design, engine horsepower, weight loading and the size and speed of the wake generated by the configurations of these variables. Results of these studies concluded that the Kenai River was maintaining a natural channel and that boats of v-hull configuration with heavy loads generated the largest waves as well as wave energy, while boats of flat-bottomed configuration produced small waves with less wave energy. In addition, it was concluded that increasing engine horsepower may slightly reduce wave size from boats of v-hull configuration.

A DNR regulation allowing the use motors of up to and including 50 horsepower in the Kenai River Special Management Area (KRSMA) where outboard motors are allowed is anticipated to become effective beginning in 2008. In addition, in 2008 and 2009 all power boats operating in the KRSMA during July would be required to use either four-stroke or direct fuel injection two-stroke motors. Beginning January 1, 2010 the DNR regulation would require all power boats operating in the KRSMA to use either four-

stroke or DFI two-stroke motors the entire year. These new outboard motor type restrictions aim to reduce hydrocarbon concentrations in the Kenai River that have been in excess of the Department of Environmental Conservation standard of 10 parts per billion during peak use in July.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: The department believes that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 288 - 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: John Sanderson

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would institute drift boat only days on the Kenai River for both guided and non-guided anglers on Sundays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from Skilak Lake downstream to the Soldotna Bridge in May June and July. It is unclear if the existing unguided, drift boat only day would be changed.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Downstream from the outlet of Skilak Lake, no one may fish from an ADNR-Parks registered guide vessel on any Sunday or Monday during May, June and July (except Memorial Day).

Downstream from the outlet of Skilak Lake, no one may fish from any motorized vessel on Mondays (except Memorial Day) during May, June and July. For purposes of this regulation, a motorized vessel is one that has a motor on board.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Fishing opportunity for power boat anglers from Skilak Lake downstream to the Soldotna Bridge would be restricted by two additional days. This proposal would reduce the level of participation in Kenai River sport fisheries, especially the early and late-run king salmon fisheries. Conflict related to issues such as; congestion on the river, hydrocarbon emissions, bank erosion, and poor quality of the angling experience could be reduced at the expense of king salmon harvest opportunity for anglers that fish from power boats. King salmon fishing effort and harvest would be lower initially. Effort and harvest may increase in the future if more anglers adapt to the new drift boat regulations.

BACKGROUND: An impressive number of seasonal and river-reach-specific boat fishing restrictions have been implemented over the past 20 years that address many of the issues described in this proposals. Prior to the 2002 season, fishing on Mondays in May and June was prohibited from any vessel. In February 2002, the board allowed

fishing on Mondays from unguided non-motorized vessels. This proposal is asking for additional relief from erosion caused by boat wakes and hydrocarbon pollution caused by outboard motor emissions.

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Army Corps of Engineers have completed studies to better understand the effect of boat wakes on Kenai River channel morphology and also between boat hull design, engine horsepower, weight loading and the size and speed of the wake generated by the configurations of these variables. Results of these studies concluded that the Kenai River was maintaining a natural channel and that boats of v-hull configuration with heavy loads generated the largest waves as well as wave energy, while boats of flat-bottomed configuration produced small waves with less wave energy. In addition, it was concluded that increasing engine horsepower may slightly reduce wave size from boats of v-hull configuration.

A DNR regulation allowing the use motors of up to and including 50 horsepower in the Kenai River Special Management Area (KRSMA) where outboard motors are allowed is anticipated to become effective beginning in 2008. In addition, in 2008 and 2009 all power boats operating in the KRSMA during July would be required to use either four-stroke or direct fuel injection two-stroke motors. Beginning January 1, 2010 the DNR regulation would require all power boats operating in the KRSMA to use either four-stroke or DFI two-stroke motors the entire year. These new outboard motor type restrictions aim to reduce hydrocarbon concentrations in the Kenai River that have been in excess of the Department of Environmental Conservation standard of 10 parts per billion during peak use in July.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: The department believes that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 289 - 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Richard Hahn

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would phase in, over a six year period, drift boat only fishing on the Kenai River for the month of July by 2013, as well as phasing in elimination of two stroke outboard motors by 2010.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Downstream from the outlet of Skilak Lake, no one may fish from an ADNR-Parks registered guide vessel on any Sunday or Monday during May, June and July (except Memorial Day).

Downstream from the outlet of Skilak Lake, no one may fish from any motorized vessel on Mondays (except Memorial Day) during May, June and July. For purposes of this regulation, a motorized vessel is one that has a motor on board.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Fishing opportunity for power boat anglers on the Kenai River would be restricted by an additional day every year until no anglers would be allowed to fish from power boats during July starting in 2013. This proposal would reduce the level of participation in the Kenai River late-run king salmon fishery. Conflict related to issues such as; congestion on the river, hydrocarbon emissions, bank erosion, and poor quality of the angling experience could be reduced at the expense of king salmon harvest opportunity for anglers that fish from power boats. King salmon fishing effort and harvest would be lower initially. Effort and harvest may increase in the future if more anglers adapt to the new drift boat regulations.

BACKGROUND: An impressive number of seasonal and river-reach-specific boat fishing restrictions have been implemented over the past 20 years that address many of the issues described in this proposals. Prior to the 2002 season, fishing on Mondays in May and June was prohibited from any vessel. In February 2002, the board allowed fishing on Mondays from unguided non-motorized vessels. This proposal is asking for additional relief from erosion caused by boat wakes and hydrocarbon pollution caused by outboard motor emissions.

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Army Corps of Engineers have completed studies to better understand the effect of boat wakes on Kenai River channel morphology and also between boat hull design, engine horsepower, weight loading and the size and speed of the wake generated by the configurations of these variables. Results of these studies concluded that the Kenai River was maintaining a natural channel and that boats of v-hull configuration with heavy loads generated the largest waves as well as wave energy, while boats of flat-bottomed configuration produced small waves with less wave energy. In addition, it was concluded that increasing engine horsepower may slightly reduce wave size from boats of v-hull configuration.

A DNR regulation allowing the use motors of up to and including 50 horsepower in the Kenai River Special Management Area (KRSMA) where outboard motors are allowed is anticipated to become effective beginning in 2008. In addition, in 2008 and 2009 all power boats operating in the KRSMA during July would be required to use either four-stroke or direct fuel injection two-stroke motors. Beginning January 1, 2010 the DNR regulation would require all power boats operating in the KRSMA to use either four-stroke or DFI two-stroke motors the entire year. These new outboard motor type restrictions aim to reduce hydrocarbon concentrations in the Kenai River that have been in excess of the Department of Environmental Conservation standard of 10 parts per billion during peak use in July.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: The department believes that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 290 - 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: John McCombs

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would prohibit fishing from motorized vessels on the Kenai River for three years until pollution levels subside and the boat wake study is completed.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Downstream from the outlet of Skilak Lake, no one may fish from an ADNR-Parks registered guide vessel on any Sunday or Monday during May, June and July (except Memorial Day).

Downstream from the outlet of Skilak Lake, no one may fish from any motorized vessel on Mondays (except Memorial Day) during May, June and July. For purposes of this regulation, a motorized vessel is one that has a motor on board.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Fishing opportunity for power boat anglers on the Kenai River would be restricted completely. This proposal would reduce the level of participation in all Kenai River sport fisheries for all species by a substantial amount. Conflicts related to river user crowding, hydrocarbon emissions, angler competition, and quality of the angling experience would be reduced at the expense of angling opportunity for a large portion of the Kenai River angling public.

BACKGROUND: An impressive number of seasonal and river-reach-specific boat fishing restrictions have been implemented over the past 20 years that address many of the issues described in this proposals. Prior to the 2002 season, fishing on Mondays in May and June was prohibited from any vessel. In February 2002, the board allowed fishing on Mondays from unguided non-motorized vessels. This proposal is asking for additional relief from erosion caused by boat wakes and hydrocarbon pollution caused by outboard motor emissions.

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Army Corps of Engineers have completed studies to better understand the effect of boat wakes on Kenai River channel morphology and also between boat hull design, engine horsepower, weight loading and the size and speed of the wake generated by the configurations of these variables. Results of these studies concluded that the Kenai River was maintaining a natural channel and that boats of v-hull configuration with heavy loads generated the largest waves as well as wave energy, while boats of flat-bottomed configuration produced small waves with less

wave energy. In addition, it was concluded that increasing engine horsepower may slightly reduce wave size from boats of v-hull configuration.

A DNR regulation allowing the use motors of up to and including 50 horsepower in the Kenai River Special Management Area (KRSMA) where outboard motors are allowed is anticipated to become effective beginning in 2008. In addition, in 2008 and 2009 all power boats operating in the KRSMA during July would be required to use either four-stroke or direct fuel injection two-stroke motors. Beginning January 1, 2010 the DNR regulation would require all power boats operating in the KRSMA to use either four-stroke or DFI two-stroke motors the entire year. These new outboard motor type restrictions aim to reduce hydrocarbon concentrations in the Kenai River that have been in excess of the Department of Environmental Conservation standard of 10 parts per billion during peak use in July.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: The department believes that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 291 - 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Richard Hahn

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would phase in, over a three year period, the elimination of two stroke outboard motors by 2010. Two stroke outboard motors would be restricted during July in 2008 and 2009. By 2010, two stroke outboard motors would be banned on the Kenai River.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? There are no regulations prohibiting the use of two stroke motors on the Kenai River.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? A major source of hydrocarbon pollution in the lower Kenai River would be eliminated by 2010 resulting in an undetermined decline in hydrocarbon levels in the lower Kenai River. It would provide a phase-out period for two-stroke motors and allow two-stroke outboard owners a two year period to participate fully in the fishery without restriction before compliance would become mandatory. This proposal may prevent or limit some individuals from participating in the sport fishery if they do not have a vessel equipped with a four-stroke or DFI two-stroke motor.

BACKGROUND: In 1984, legislation created the Kenai River Special Management Area (KRSMA) with management assigned to the Department of Natural Resources, Division

of Parks and Outdoor Recreation (DPOR). The KRSMA includes Kenai and Skilak Lakes and the entire river system downstream to river mile 4, near the Warren Ames Bridge.

Data collected from 2000-2006 indicates that the State Water Quality Standards of 10 parts per billion total aqueous hydrocarbons were consistently exceeded each summer with a direct correlation between the levels of hydrocarbons and the number of motorized vessels, especially when two-stroke motors constitute a large percentage of the vessels. In 2006, the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) listed the lower 19 miles of the Kenai River as a Category 5 impaired waterbody for petroleum hydrocarbon pollution exceeding state water quality standards.

ADF&G, DEC, & DNR have been working together to put controls in place that will bring the waterbody back into compliance with state water quality standards. DNR has proposed to adopt regulation changes in Title 11 of the Alaska Administrative Code dealing with boat and motor restrictions in the KRSMA. The proposed regulations are planned to take effect beginning in 2008, requiring all power boats operating in the KRSMA during July to use either four-stroke or DFI two-stroke motors. Also proposed is beginning January 1, 2010 all power boats operating in the KRSMA must have either four-stroke or DFI two-stroke motors year round.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department recommends **NO ACTION** on this proposal. It is anticipated that the two stroke outboard motor use on the Kenai River will be restricted beginning in 2008.

COST ANALYSIS: The department believes that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 292 - 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area; and 5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Andy Szczensy

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would require the use of four stroke or direct fuel injected outboard motors on vessels operated in the sport and personal use fishery on the Kenai River.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? There are no regulations prohibiting the use of two stroke motors on the Kenai River.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? A major source of hydrocarbon pollution in the lower Kenai River would be eliminated by 2010 resulting in an undetermined decline in hydrocarbon levels in the lower Kenai River. It would provide a phase-out period for two-stroke motors and allow two-stroke outboard

owners a two year period to participate fully in the fishery without restriction before compliance would become mandatory. This proposal may prevent or limit some individuals from participating in the sport fishery if they do not have a vessel equipped with a four-stroke or DFI two-stroke motor.

BACKGROUND: In 1984, legislation created the Kenai River Special Management Area (KRSMA) with management assigned to the Department of Natural Resources, Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation (DPOR). The KRSMA includes Kenai and Skilak Lakes and the entire river system downstream to river mile 4, near the Warren Ames Bridge.

Data collected from 2000-2006 indicates that the State Water Quality Standards of 10 parts per billion total aqueous hydrocarbons were consistently exceeded each summer with a direct correlation between the levels of hydrocarbons and the number of motorized vessels, especially when two-stroke motors constitute a large percentage of the vessels. In 2006, the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) listed the lower 19 miles of the Kenai River as a Category 5 impaired waterbody for petroleum hydrocarbon pollution exceeding state water quality standards.

ADF&G, DEC, & DNR have been working together to put controls in place that will bring the waterbody back into compliance with state water quality standards. DNR has proposed to adopt regulation changes in Title 11 of the Alaska Administrative Code dealing with boat and motor restrictions in the KRSMA. The proposed regulations are planned to take effect beginning in 2008, requiring all power boats operating in the KRSMA during July to use either four-stroke or DFI two-stroke motors. Also proposed is beginning January 1, 2010 all power boats operating in the KRSMA must have either four-stroke or DFI two-stroke motors year round.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department recommends **NO ACTION** on this proposal. It is anticipated that the two stroke outboard motor use on the Kenai River will be restricted beginning in 2008. In addition, Proposals 221 – 223 seek changes specific to the personal use fishery.

COST ANALYSIS: The department believes that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 293 - 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area

PROPOSED BY: Mel Erickson

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would require the use of four stroke or direct fuel injected outboard motors on vessels operated in the sport fishery on the Kenai River.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? There are no regulations prohibiting the use of two stroke motors on the Kenai River.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? A major source of hydrocarbon pollution in the lower Kenai River would be eliminated by 2010 resulting in an undetermined decline in hydrocarbon levels in the lower Kenai River. It would provide a phase-out period for two-stroke motors and allow two-stroke outboard owners a two year period to participate fully in the fishery without restriction before compliance would become mandatory. This proposal may prevent or limit some individuals from participating in the sport fishery if they do not have a vessel equipped with a four-stroke or DFI two-stroke motor.

BACKGROUND: In 1984, legislation created the Kenai River Special Management Area (KRSMA) with management assigned to the Department of Natural Resources, Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation (DPOR). The KRSMA includes Kenai and Skilak Lakes and the entire river system downstream to river mile 4, near the Warren Ames Bridge.

Data collected from 2000-2006 indicates that the State Water Quality Standards of 10 parts per billion total aqueous hydrocarbons were consistently exceeded each summer with a direct correlation between the levels of hydrocarbons and the number of motorized vessels, especially when two-stroke motors constitute a large percentage of the vessels. In 2006, the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) listed the lower 19 miles of the Kenai River as a Category 5 impaired waterbody for petroleum hydrocarbon pollution exceeding state water quality standards.

ADF&G, DEC, & DNR have been working together to put controls in place that will bring the waterbody back into compliance with state water quality standards. DNR has proposed to adopt regulation changes in Title 11 of the Alaska Administrative Code dealing with boat and motor restrictions in the KRSMA. The proposed regulations are planned to take effect beginning in 2008, requiring all power boats operating in the KRSMA during July to use either four-stroke or DFI two-stroke motors. Also proposed is beginning January 1, 2010 all power boats operating in the KRSMA must have either four-stroke or DFI two-stroke motors year round.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department recommends **NO ACTION** on this proposal. It is anticipated that the two stroke outboard motor use on the Kenai River will be restricted beginning in 2008 and that will bring the waterbody back into compliance with state water quality standards hydrocarbon levels.

COST ANALYSIS: The department believes that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 294 - 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area; and 5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: City of Kenai, Kenai Peninsula Borough, City of Soldotna

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would regulate motorized use for both the king salmon sport fishery and the sockeye salmon personal use fishery during the month of July on the Kenai River that is fair and equal to all user groups. Solutions include, but are not limited to:

1. Changes in means and methods that limits motorized running time.
2. Limit the total number of motorized boats operating at any one time on the river with a complete phase out of non-direct fuel injected (DFI) 2-strokes.
3. Increase use of electric motors or drift boats.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Downstream from the outlet of Skilak Lake, no one may fish from an ADNR-Parks registered guide vessel on any Sunday or Monday during May, June and July (except Memorial Day).

Downstream from the outlet of Skilak Lake, no one may fish from any motorized vessel on Mondays (except Memorial Day) during May, June and July. For purposes of this regulation, a motorized vessel is one that has a motor on board.

Alaska State Parks Boating Regulation - No one may operate a boat on the Kenai River with an outboard motor or combination of outboard motors having a total prop shaft rating greater than 35 HP.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal primarily seeks to reduce hydrocarbon pollution in the lower Kenai River. It is presumed that action by the board would result in an undetermined decline in hydrocarbon levels in the lower Kenai River. Because the proposal presents a broad array of options, the department is unable to speculate on all the possible effects.

BACKGROUND: In 1984, legislation created the Kenai River Special Management Area (KRSMA) with management assigned to the Department of Natural Resources, Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation (DPOR). The KRSMA includes Kenai and Skilak Lakes and the entire river system downstream to river mile 4, near the Warren Ames Bridge.

Data collected from 2000-2006 indicates that the State Water Quality Standards of 10 parts per billion total aqueous hydrocarbons were consistently exceeded each summer with a direct correlation between the levels of hydrocarbons and the number of motorized vessels, especially when two-stroke motors constitute a large percentage of the vessels. In 2006, the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) listed the lower 19 miles of the Kenai River as a Category 5 impaired waterbody for petroleum hydrocarbon pollution exceeding state water quality standards.

ADF&G, DEC, & DNR have been working together to put controls in place that will bring the waterbody back into compliance with state water quality standards. DNR has

proposed to adopt regulation changes in Title 11 of the Alaska Administrative Code dealing with boat and motor restrictions in the KRSMA. The proposed regulations are planned to take effect beginning in 2008, requiring all power boats operating in the KRSMA during July to use either four-stroke or DFI two-stroke motors. Also proposed is beginning January 1, 2010 all power boats operating in the KRSMA must have either four-stroke or DFI two-stroke motors year round.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department recommends **NO ACTION** on this proposal. It is anticipated that the two stroke outboard motor use on the Kenai River will be restricted beginning in 2008 and that will bring the waterbody back into compliance with state water quality standards hydrocarbon levels.

COST ANALYSIS: The department believes that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 295 - 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area;

PROPOSED BY: Jeff Stephans

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would regulate motorized use for fishing on the Kenai River to reduce hydrocarbon discharge. Solutions include, but are not limited to:

1. Less hours of fishing for guides each day.
2. More drift fishing only days.
3. No fishing from a boat while the engine is running.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Downstream from the outlet of Skilak Lake, no one may fish from an ADNR-Parks registered guide vessel on any Sunday or Monday during May, June and July (except Memorial Day).

Downstream from the outlet of Skilak Lake, no one may fish from any motorized vessel on Mondays (except Memorial Day) during May, June and July. For purposes of this regulation, a motorized vessel is one that has a motor on board.

Alaska State Parks Boating Regulation - No one may operate a boat on the Kenai River with an outboard motor or combination of outboard motors having a total prop shaft rating greater than 35 HP.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal primarily seeks to reduce hydrocarbon pollution in the lower Kenai River. It is presumed that action by the board would result in an undetermined decline in hydrocarbon levels in the lower Kenai River. Because the proposal presents a broad array of options, the department is unable to speculate on all the possible effects.

BACKGROUND: In 1984, legislation created the Kenai River Special Management Area (KRSMA) with management assigned to the Department of Natural Resources, Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation (DPOR). The KRSMA includes Kenai and Skilak Lakes and the entire river system downstream to river mile 4, near the Warren Ames Bridge.

Data collected from 2000-2006 indicates that the State Water Quality Standards of 10 parts per billion total aqueous hydrocarbons were consistently exceeded each summer with a direct correlation between the levels of hydrocarbons and the number of motorized vessels, especially when two-stroke motors constitute a large percentage of the vessels. In 2006, the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) listed the lower 19 miles of the Kenai River as a Category 5 impaired waterbody for petroleum hydrocarbon pollution exceeding state water quality standards.

ADF&G, DEC, & DNR have been working together to put controls in place that will bring the waterbody back into compliance with state water quality standards. DNR has proposed to adopt regulation changes in Title 11 of the Alaska Administrative Code dealing with boat and motor restrictions in the KRSMA. The proposed regulations are planned to take effect beginning in 2008, requiring all power boats operating in the KRSMA during July to use either four-stroke or DFI two-stroke motors. Also proposed is beginning January 1, 2010 all power boats operating in the KRSMA must have either four-stroke or DFI two-stroke motors year round.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. It is anticipated that the two stroke outboard motor use on the Kenai River will be restricted beginning in 2008 and that will bring the waterbody back into compliance with state water quality standards hydrocarbon levels.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 296 - 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Matthew Hall

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would maintain the current restriction of outboard motors to a maximum of 35 horsepower rating on the Kenai River, reduce days on the river open to guided fishing, and replace motorized days with drift boat only days.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Downstream from the outlet of Skilak Lake, no one may fish from an ADNR-Parks registered guide vessel on any Sunday or Monday during May, June and July (except Memorial Day).

Downstream from the outlet of Skilak Lake, no one may fish from any motorized vessel on Mondays (except Memorial Day) during May, June and July. For purposes of this regulation, a motorized vessel is one that has a motor on board.

Alaska State Parks Boating Regulation - No one may operate a boat on the Kenai River with an outboard motor or combination of outboard motors having a total prop shaft rating greater than 35 HP.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Fishing opportunity for power boat anglers on the Kenai River would be restricted completely. It would also reduce the number of days allowed for guided sport fishing downstream of Skilak Lake each week. This proposal would reduce the level of participation in all Kenai River sport fisheries for all species by a substantial amount. Conflicts related to river user crowding, hydrocarbon emissions, angler competition, and quality of the angling experience would be reduced – at the expense of angling opportunity for a large portion of the Kenai River angling public.

This proposal would have no effect on the horsepower limitation regulation in Title 11 of the Alaska Administrative Code (11 AAC 20.860. Boat Motor Use).

BACKGROUND: The Kenai River Comprehensive Management Plan was developed by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) in 1986 forming the basis for the management actions and management of state lands and waters within the Kenai River Special Management Area and other state land within the planning boundaries of this management plan. The management plan restricted the total horsepower rating for outboard motors used on the Kenai River to 50 horsepower in 1986. DNR regulations were passed prior to the summer of 1987 further reducing the maximum horsepower rating for outboard motors on the Kenai River to 35 horsepower. Establishing the 35 horsepower outboard motor limit was in response to the growth of the sport fishery on the Kenai River and issues involving safety, crowding, and bank erosion due to vessel wakes. The DNR regulation restricting the use of outboards to 35 horsepower or less on the Kenai River remains in effect for that portion of the river from the Warren Ames Bridge upstream to just above river mile 47.

A DNR regulation allowing the use motors of up to and including 50 horsepower in the Kenai River Special Management Area (KRSMA) where outboard motors are allowed is anticipated to become effective beginning in 2008. In addition, in 2008 and 2009 all power boats operating in the KRSMA during July would be required to use either four-stroke or direct fuel injection two-stroke motors. Beginning January 1, 2010 the DNR regulation would require all power boats operating in the KRSMA to use either four-stroke or DFI two-stroke motors the entire year. These new outboard motor type restrictions aim to reduce hydrocarbon concentrations in the Kenai River that have been in excess of the Department of Environmental Conservation standard of 10 parts per billion during peak use in July.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department recommends **NO ACTION** on modifying the horsepower portion of this proposal and is **NEUTRAL** on the allocative aspects of limiting guides and powerboats. Changes to the horsepower regulation would need to go before the Department of Natural Resources.

COST ANALYSIS: The department believes that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 297 - 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: John Egan

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would prohibit king salmon fishing from boats for a 48 hour period each week from 6:00 am on Wednesdays to 6:00 am on Fridays from June 25 to July 31. The intent of the proposal is to allow more king salmon to migrate upstream for middle river anglers to fish.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Sport fishing in the Kenai River is allowed 24-hours a day for unguided anglers, and Tuesday through Saturday from 6am to 6pm for guided anglers.

Downstream from the outlet of Skilak Lake, no one may fish from an ADNR-Parks registered guide vessel on any Sunday or Monday during May, June and July (except Memorial Day).

Downstream from the outlet of Skilak Lake, no one may fish from any motorized vessel on Mondays (except Memorial Day) during May, June and July. For purposes of this regulation, a motorized vessel is one that has a motor on board.

During May, June and July, sport fishing from a registered guide vessel downstream of Skilak Lake is permitted only from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would likely reduce angling effort, harvest and catch by some unknown amount. Weekly angling opportunity would be reduced by 40% for guided anglers and 29% for unguided anglers. The reduced opportunity would likely increase effort and congestion on days when fishing is allowed. This proposal may move more fish and anglers into the middle portion of the Kenai River.

BACKGROUND: Over the past two decades the Board of Fisheries has continually addressed regulations intended to restrict angling harvest of king salmon by reducing guided angling effort, provide non-guided anglers with hours free of competition with

guided anglers and control angler congestion on the Kenai River. In 1985 the board adopted the regulation restricting guided sport fishing from 6:00 am to 6:00 pm.

The numbers of king salmon available to inriver anglers and the harvest rates have remained relatively stable through time. Currently, in areas of the Kenai River drainage open to king salmon fishing there are no hourly restrictions for non-guided anglers hence non-guided anglers may fish throughout the area open to king salmon fishing

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. This proposal is a social and allocative issue between different users of the river.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 298 - 5 AAC 57.140. Kenai River guiding and guided fishing requirements in the Kenai River drainage area.

PROPOSED BY: Rod and Randy Berg

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would prohibit non-resident anglers from fishing from a vessel between 6:00 pm and 6:00 am on the Kenai River from June 1 to July 31 unless accompanied by a relative with second degree of kindred who is a resident Alaskan.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? During May, June and July, sport fishing from a registered guide vessel downstream of Skilak Lake is permitted only from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. In addition, downstream of the outlet of Skilak Lake, a person may not sport fish from a registered guide vessel on any Sunday from May 1 through July 31

On any Monday in May through July, except for Memorial Day, a person may not fish from a boat in the portion of the Kenai River from the outlet of Skilak Lake to the mouth of the river, except that unguided sport fishing from a non-motorized vessel is allowed on Mondays in May through July.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would decrease an unguided, nonresident angler's opportunity to fish from a boat for king salmon during June and July by an unknown amount. Catch and harvest of king salmon and resident species by nonresident anglers who do not fish with a relative that is an Alaskan resident would likely decrease by an undetermined amount as a result of this decreased opportunity. It is unknown if this proposal would be effective at discouraging illegal guide activities.

BACKGROUND: In 2003, the BOF adopted a regulation that prohibited nonresident anglers from fishing from a boat in the Kenai River during May and June between the hours of 6:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. This regulation was adopted to: 1) effectively allocate

more opportunity to resident anglers targeting early-run king salmon and 2) discourage illegal guiding activities in the Kenai River. The board rescinded this regulation in 2005. There is a level of illegal guiding on the Kenai River, but the extent is not known.

The second degree of kindred requirement works well in big game hunting by nonresidents because the wildlife Troopers only come across it once in a while. Therefore the volume of checking to see if two people are related is low and manageable for hunting.

On the Kenai River there would potentially be quite a few nonresidents on the river in the evenings and mornings claiming that their partner is related and the workload for rangers and troopers would increase dramatically if they wanted to verify very many of the claims. Also, if passed as written, it appears that guides could take nonresident family members fishing while friends of nonresidents could not.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. The sheer numbers involved for enforcement may make this proposal very difficult for enforcement officers and thus have little effect on compliance.

COST ANALYSIS:
The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 299 - 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: James Karl Johnson

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would open waters currently closed to fishing from a boat in the Kenai River below the Soldotna Bridge during the king salmon season.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Slikok Creek Closure: The Kenai River, from ADF&G markers about 300 yards downstream of the mouth of Slikok Creek, upstream to ADF&G markers about 100 yards upstream from the mouth of Slikok Creek, is a fly-fishing-only water and is closed to king salmon fishing and fishing from boats January 1 through July 14.

Centennial Campground Closure: From May 15 to the end of the king salmon season (or July 31, whichever is later), the Kenai River from ADF&G markers 250 yd downstream from the upper breakwater at the Centennial Campground boat launch upstream to the Sterling Highway bridge in Soldotna is closed to fishing from boats.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would increase the area open to anglers fishing from a boat by an addition river mile. The Slikok Creek stock of king salmon would have no sanctuary for staging before their migration upstream, and would be in jeopardy of overexploitation, as that particular stock is small. Social problems may develop due to boat traffic congestion and conflict between shore-based and boat anglers in the area around Centennial Campground.

BACKGROUND: The Board of Fisheries adopted the seasonal closed-water regulations which restrict fishing in the confluence areas of Slikok Creek, Funny River and the Killey River at the request of the department during the November 1996 meeting. Information gathered during several tagging and radio-telemetry studies conducted by the department and other resource agencies indicate that some early-run king salmon may hold in confluence areas or the mainstem until mid-July before ascending tributaries to spawn.

The riverbank area along the City of Soldotna's Centennial Park Campground is one of the few areas on the Kenai River where shore-based anglers consistently fish for king salmon from shore. It is also a relatively intensive boat launch area with several hundred boats utilizing the launch facility daily during the peak weeks of the fishing season.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. The Slikok Creek stock of king salmon would have no sanctuary area for staging before their migration upstream and would be in jeopardy of overexploitation.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 300 - 5 AAC 57.xxx. New regulation.

PROPOSED BY: James Karl Johnson

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would require all powerboat operators to pass an Alaska powerboat operators course before operating a powerboat on the Kenai River.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? No course for powerboat operation is required for non-commercial boat operators for any water body in the state of Alaska.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would reduced fishing opportunity for powerboat anglers that have not passed a proposed powerboat operators class specific for the Kenai River. It is unknown whether or not boating safety would be improved.

BACKGROUND: Department of Natural Resources State Parks Division is the regulating agency that would submit the proposal to require a boating safety course for all river users, not just anglers fishing from a vessel. Questions arise as to who would offer

the class, when the classes would be offered, and where the classes would be conducted. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game working with the Department of Natural Resources Office of Boating Safety has inserted the Alaska State Parks boating regulations on the mainstem Kenai River as well as other boat safety reminders into the Southcentral Alaska sport fishing regulations summary booklet over the past several years.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department recommends **NO ACTION** on this proposal. Board action to require a boater safety course to operate a boat on the Kenai River for all boaters is not within the authority of the board.

COST ANALYSIS: The department believes that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 301 - 5 AAC 57.123. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Upper Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Cooper Landing Fish and Game Advisory Council

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would prohibit the use of outboard motors from a marker ¼ mile above the Sterling Highway Bridge near Kenai Lake and the "drift only" marker just upstream of the Princess Rapids.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The drift only area of the Upper Kenai River occurs at the inlet of the Upper Kenai River into Skilak Lake upstream to river mile 80.7 of the Upper Kenai River. Upstream of RM 80.7 to RM 82.0 there is a unrestricted horsepower, 5 miles per hour maximum, no wake area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would prevent drift boats from using a motor to make multiple trips back upstream to fish a certain stretch of river. This would also reduce fishing opportunity of powerboat anglers in a two mile stretch of the Upper Kenai River.

BACKGROUND: Under a drift only regulation fishing from a vessel with a motor on board is allowed however the motor may not be operated in drift only waters. The drift boat only regulation prohibits fishing from a vessel with a motor on board. The area upstream of RM 80.7 contains a boat launch from where powerboat anglers access Kenai Lake. In addition, float planes (private and commercial) use this area for taxi, take-off and landing. Drift boats with motors on board launch to fish the upstream area adjacent to the Sterling Highway Bridge as well as float downstream to Skilak Lake where motors may be used. This area was established in the DNR Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation in the Kenai River Comprehensive Management Plan in 1997 to focus the motor boat fishery to the developed Cooper Landing section (RM 80.7-RM 82.0) of the Upper Kenai River.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. The department does not have information on the number of boats drifting downstream and motoring upstream to repeatedly fish the 1.3 miles of river identified by the proposal.

COST ANALYSIS:
The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

GUIDES – KENAI & KASILOF RIVERS

PROPOSAL 302 - 5 AAC 57.140. Kenai River guiding and guided fishing requirements in the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Ted Wellman

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would institute a limited entry program for sport fishing guides on the Kenai and Kasilof Rivers.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? There are no regulations that provide for limited entry of sport fishing guides.

All sport fishing guide business owners and sport fishing guides are required to be licensed through the department. All guided fishing trips on both salt and fresh waters are required to be reported in a logbook and submitted to the department.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Sport fishing opportunity for guided anglers may be reduced by an unknown amount. Initially and depending on the number of guides allowed, it could lessen congestion on the Kenai River at times when both guided and non-guided anglers are allowed to fish. Thereafter, congestion on the Kenai River could return when non-guide anglers adapt to the new regulations. The cost of guided fishing may increase if the number of guides is limited or reduced.

BACKGROUND: In 1991 the Department of Natural Resources, Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, developed a proposal to limit the number of guides on the Kenai River. Under this proposal the long-term number of guides allowed to operate on the Kenai River was set at 250. The proposal was determined to be unconstitutional by the Attorney General of the State of Alaska and therefore was rescinded. The number of guides registered with the DNR operating on the Kenai River has grown from 301 registered guides in 1991 to 396 registered guides in 2007.

The sport fish guide industry provides residents and visitors opportunities to participate in Alaskan sport fisheries. These opportunities result in anglers being able to feed their families as well as contribute to the economies of Alaska's many coastal communities.

They also result in numerous job opportunities, both directly as owners of guide businesses and their employed guides and deckhands and indirectly as hotel owners tackle stores, and packaging services.

Allocation conflicts between unguided and guided fisheries and between commercial and guided fisheries are occurring. Examples include: Southeast Alaska king salmon, halibut, and Cook Inlet salmon. To address these conflicts various regulatory agencies are trying to "restrict" guide operations.

The BOF is doing this through a variety of means including, but not limited to, limiting days guided anglers can fish to limiting the number of guided anglers on a vessel. Other regulatory agencies, including the National Marine Fisheries Service and various federal and state land management agencies including the Alaska State Parks, are also limiting guide operations through federally-authorized limited entry programs or concessionaire permits, respectively. None of these programs however comprehensively address the root issue.

As a result these attempts cause instability in the sport fishing guide industry. For example, over a seven year period about 45% of the participants in the halibut charter fishery changed. These attempts also differentially impact anglers who rely on guide operations to access Alaska's fishery resources, many of whom are Alaskans.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department recommends **NO ACTION** on this proposal. A limited entry program likely requires legislative action to implement and the board does not have the statutory authority to institute a limited entry program on the Kenai River.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 303 - 5 AAC 57.140. Kenai River guiding and guided fishing requirements in the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Warren Crawford

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would modify existing Kenai River guide hours from 6:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., to 7:00 a.m. – 7:00pm.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? During May, June and July, sport fishing from a registered guide vessel downstream of Skilak Lake is permitted only from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. In addition, downstream of the outlet of Skilak Lake, a person may not sport fish from a registered guide vessel on any Sunday from May 1 through July 31

On any Monday in May through July, except for Memorial Day, a person may not fish from a boat in the portion of the Kenai River from the outlet of Skilak Lake to the mouth

of the river, except that unguided sport fishing from a non-motorized vessel is allowed on Mondays in May through July.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Guided anglers would start and stop fishing one hour later. It is unlikely that there would be any measurable affect on effort, catch, and harvest of king salmon.

BACKGROUND: Since 1985, during June and July, sport fishing from registered guide vessels has been permitted only from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (except for the years 1986 – 1988 when during July the time was 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.). In 2000, the daily time restrictions were extended to include the month of May. Guided anglers are also restricted from fishing on the Kenai River, downstream of Skilak Lake, from a registered guide vessel on Sundays or Mondays in May through July (except Memorial Day). These regulations are intended to restrict angling harvest of king salmon by reducing guided angling effort, provide non-guided anglers with hours free of competition with guided anglers, and control angler congestion on the Kenai River.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. This proposal addresses a social issue between guided and unguided anglers for fishing opportunity.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 304 - 5 AAC 57.140. Kenai River guiding and guided fishing requirements in the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai Area Fishermen's Coalition

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would modify existing Kenai River guide hours from 6:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., to 7:00 a.m. – 7:00p.m.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? During May, June and July, sport fishing from a registered guide vessel downstream of Skilak Lake is permitted only from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. In addition, downstream of the outlet of Skilak Lake, a person may not sport fish from a registered guide vessel on any Sunday from May 1 through July 31

On any Monday in May through July, except for Memorial Day, a person may not fish from a boat in the portion of the Kenai River from the outlet of Skilak Lake to the mouth of the river, except that unguided sport fishing from a non-motorized vessel is allowed on Mondays in May through July.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Guided anglers would start and stop fishing one hour later. It is unlikely that there would be any measurable affect on effort, catch, and harvest of king salmon.

BACKGROUND: Since 1985, during June and July, sport fishing from registered guide vessels has been permitted only from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (except for the years 1986 – 1988 when during July the time was 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.). In 2000, the daily time restrictions were extended to include the month of May. Guided anglers are also restricted from fishing on the Kenai River, downstream of Skilak Lake, from a registered guide vessel on Sundays or Mondays in May through July (except Memorial Day). These regulations are intended to restrict angling harvest of king salmon by reducing guided angling effort, provide non-guided anglers with hours free of competition with guided anglers, and control angler congestion on the Kenai River.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. This proposal addresses a social issue between guided and unguided anglers for fishing opportunity.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 305 - 5 AAC 57.140. Kenai River guiding and guided fishing requirements in the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: L.R. Anderson

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Modify existing Kenai River guide hours from 6:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., to 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. during June and July.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? During May, June and July, sport fishing from a registered guide vessel downstream of Skilak Lake is permitted only from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. In addition, downstream of the outlet of Skilak Lake, a person may not sport fish from a registered guide vessel on any Sunday from May 1 through July 31

On any Monday in May through July, except for Memorial Day, a person may not fish from a boat in the portion of the Kenai River from the outlet of Skilak Lake to the mouth of the river, except that unguided sport fishing from a non-motorized vessel is allowed on Mondays in May through July.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Guided anglers would start and stop fishing two hours later. It is unlikely that there would be any measurable affect on effort, catch, and harvest of king salmon.

BACKGROUND: Since 1985, during June and July, sport fishing from registered guide vessels has been permitted only from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (except for the years 1986 – 1988 when during July the time was 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.). In 2000, the daily time restrictions were extended to include the month of May. Guided anglers are also restricted from fishing on the Kenai River, downstream of Skilak Lake, from a registered

guide vessel on Sundays or Mondays in May through July (except Memorial Day). These regulations are intended to restrict angling harvest of king salmon by reducing guided angling effort, provide non-guided anglers with hours free of competition with guided anglers, and control angler congestion on the Kenai River.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. This proposal addresses a social issue between guided and unguided anglers for fishing opportunity.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 306 - 5 AAC 57.140. Kenai River guiding and guided fishing requirements in the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Warren Crawford

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would prohibit registered guide boats with clients on board from being on the Kenai River in a fishing hole until 5:50 a.m.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? During May, June and July, sport fishing from a registered guide vessel downstream of Skilak Lake is permitted only from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. In addition, downstream of the outlet of Skilak Lake, a person may not sport fish from a registered guide vessel on any Sunday from May 1 through July 31

There is a DNR regulation for the Kenai River Special Management Area (11 AAC 20.862 (b)) which states: "A person may not anchor a boat in the Kenai River Special Management Area in a manner obstructing a primary traffic channel or drift fishing channel of any section of the river between May 15 and July 31." There is no DNR regulation prohibiting a registered guide vessel from being on the water prior to 6:00 a.m.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Preventing guide boats from staging in fishing areas prior to the start of fishing until ten minutes before the start of guided fishing may provide a small amount of additional time unguided anglers and guided anglers are separated. The amount of staging in fishing holes by sport fishing guides is unknown.

BACKGROUND: Since 1985, during June and July, sport fishing from registered guide vessels has been permitted only from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (except for the years 1986 – 1988 when during July the time was 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.). In 2000, the daily time restrictions were extended to include the month of May. Guided anglers are also restricted from fishing on the Kenai River, downstream of Skilak Lake, from a registered guide vessel on Sundays or Mondays in May through July (except Memorial Day).These regulations are intended to restrict angling harvest of king salmon by reducing guided

angling effort, provide non-guided anglers with hours free of competition with guided anglers, and control angler congestion on the Kenai River.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. This proposal addresses a social issue between guided and unguided anglers for fishing opportunity.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 307 - 5 AAC 57.140. Kenai River guiding and guided fishing requirements in the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai River Fishermen's Coalition

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would prohibit registered guide boats with clients on board from being on the Kenai River until 5:30 a.m.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? During May, June and July, sport fishing from a registered guide vessel downstream of Skilak Lake is permitted only from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. In addition, downstream of the outlet of Skilak Lake, a person may not sport fish from a registered guide vessel on any Sunday from May 1 through July 31

There is a DNR regulation for the Kenai River Special Management Area (11 AAC 20.862 (b)) which states: "A person may not anchor a boat in the Kenai River Special Management Area in a manner obstructing a primary traffic channel or drift fishing channel of any section of the river between May 15 and July 31." There is no DNR regulation prohibiting a registered guide vessel from being on the water prior to 6:00 a.m.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? If adopted, it would be reasonable to expect a reduction in time fished by guided boat anglers and a reduction in total guided angler catch and harvest by a small amount. Some guided vessels travel over 30 minutes from boat launches, lodges, etc. to transport anglers to and from the fishing grounds.

BACKGROUND: Since 1985, during June and July, sport fishing from registered guide vessels has been permitted only from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (except for the years 1986 – 1988 when during July the time was 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.). In 2000, the daily time restrictions were extended to include the month of May. Guided anglers are also restricted from fishing on the Kenai River, downstream of Skilak Lake, from a registered guide vessel on Sundays or Mondays in May through July (except Memorial Day).These regulations are intended to restrict angling harvest of king salmon by reducing guided angling effort, provide non-guided anglers with hours free of competition with guided anglers, and control angler congestion on the Kenai River.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. This proposal addresses the allocative issues of angler crowding, fishing aesthetics, and competition between guided and unguided anglers for fishing opportunity.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 308 - 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area; and 5 AAC 57.140. Kenai River guiding and guided fishing requirements in the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Dwight Kramer

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would separate guided and non-guided users on the Kenai River by time and day during the month of July as follows:

Monday – unguided anglers only, no power boats(drift only). 24 hrs.
Tuesday – guided anglers only, no power boats(drift only). 24 hrs.
All other days, for fishing from a boat –

- Odd numbered days, guided anglers from 1:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., unguided anglers from 1:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.
- Even numbered days, unguided anglers from 1:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., guided anglers from 1:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? During May, June and July, sport fishing from a registered guide vessel downstream of Skilak Lake is permitted only from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. In addition, downstream of the outlet of Skilak Lake, a person may not sport fish from a registered guide vessel on any Sunday from May 1 through July 31

On any Monday in May through July, except for Memorial Day, a person may not fish from a boat in the portion of the Kenai River from the outlet of Skilak Lake to the mouth of the river, except that unguided sport fishing from a non-motorized vessel is allowed on Mondays in May through July.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Guided and non-guided anglers would not occupy the Kenai River concurrently while fishing, as both users would have specific times in which they could fish. Using July of 2007 as an example, guided anglers would have had a net gain of 78 hours of fishing opportunity. Conversely, unguided anglers would have had a net loss of 424 hours of fishing opportunity. The end result however, would be that both user groups have equal fishing opportunity on the Kenai River. It would create regulatory complexity and require all anglers to schedule fishing within dates and hours of the days allowed only by regulation. There are likely numerous unintended consequences that are immeasurable in this large-scale reconfiguration of the Kenai River fishery.

BACKGROUND: Since 1985, during June and July, sport fishing from registered guide vessels has been permitted only from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (except for the years 1986 – 1988 when during July the time was 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.). In 2000, the daily time restrictions were extended to include the month of May. Guided anglers are also restricted from fishing on the Kenai River, downstream of Skilak Lake, from a registered guide vessel on Sundays or Mondays in May through July (except Memorial Day).These regulations are intended to restrict angling harvest of king salmon by reducing guided angling effort, provide non-guided anglers with hours free of competition with guided anglers, and control angler congestion on the Kenai River.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. This proposal addresses the allocative issues of angler crowding, fishing aesthetics, and competition between guided and unguided anglers for fishing opportunity.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 309 - 5 AAC 57.140. Kenai River guiding and guided fishing requirements in the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: L.R. Anderson

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would prohibit fishing from registered guide vessels on Thursdays in June and July.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? During May, June and July, sport fishing from a registered guide vessel downstream of Skilak Lake is permitted only from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. In addition, downstream of the outlet of Skilak Lake, a person may not sport fish from a registered guide vessel on any Sunday from May 1 through July 31

On any Monday in May through July, except for Memorial Day, a person may not fish from a boat in the portion of the Kenai River from the outlet of Skilak Lake to the mouth of the river, except that unguided sport fishing from a non-motorized vessel is allowed on Mondays in May through July.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? If adopted, this proposal would add another day to the two existing days sport fishing from a registered vessel is prohibited during June, and July. Restricting fishing from a registered guide vessel on Thursdays would reduce guided boat angler fishing opportunity by 20% on the Kenai River. This reduction would likely reduce the overall guided boat angler salmon catch and harvest by some undetermined amount. Initially it would provide non-guided anglers additional fishing opportunity with less congestion, thereafter it would be likely that more non-guided fishing activity would occur once the public adapted to the new regulation.

BACKGROUND: Exploitation rates in the recreational harvest during the early-run average about 32% and the average total exploitation rate, including commercial harvest, for the late-run is approximately 48%. As a result, the board has adopted management plans structured to constrain the harvest of these king salmon stocks to sustainable levels while still providing for fishing opportunity. The management guidelines that the board has adopted through the years have closed specific areas of the river to all fishing, restricted certain areas of the river to shore fishing only, and imposed time and date closures for all guided anglers. In addition, the board has continued to address the harvest disparity that exists between guided and unguided anglers and resident and nonresident anglers within the Kenai River king salmon sport fishery.

To create more parity between guided and unguided harvest and effort, the board placed daily time restrictions on guided anglers. Beginning in 1985, during June and July, sport fishing from registered guide vessels has been permitted only from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (except for the years 1986 – 1988 when during July the time was 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.). Since the early 1980's, guides have been prohibited from sport fishing while clients were present. Subsequent meetings have resulted in further restrictions placed upon guides and the guided angler.

In 2000, the daily time restrictions were extended to include the month of May. Guided anglers are also restricted from fishing on the Kenai River, downstream of Skilak Lake, from a registered guide vessel on Sundays or Mondays in May through July (except Memorial Day). These regulations are intended to restrict sport harvest of king salmon by reducing guided angling effort, provide non-guided anglers with hours free of competition with guided anglers and control angler congestion on the Kenai River.

Preliminary estimates from the 2007 season reveal that guided anglers accounted for 73% (1,934) of the early-run king salmon harvested from the Kenai River below the Soldotna Bridge, while expending 64% of the total fishing effort. Guided anglers harvested 6,405 (69%) of the total estimated late-run harvest of the preliminary estimated late-run harvest of 9,258 king salmon harvested below the Soldotna Bridge. In the late-run guided anglers accounted for about 49% of the total king salmon fishing effort below the Soldotna Bridge. Over the past few years, from 2004 - 2007, guided anglers have accounted for an average of 73% of the total early-run harvest and 61% of the total late-run harvest while comprising 61% and 47% of the total early-and late-run fishing effort, respectively.

From 2004 – 2006 the average time to catch an early run king salmon was 14 hours for guided anglers and 24 hours for unguided anglers. During the late run guided anglers averaged a king salmon every 9 hours while the average for unguided anglers was a king salmon every 14 hours. During the 2007 early run, the average time to catch a king salmon for guided anglers was 15 hours compared to 27 hours for unguided anglers. For the late run on average guided anglers caught a king salmon every 16 hours, while the average for unguided anglers was 23 hours per king salmon.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 310 - 5 AAC 57.140. Kenai River guiding and guided fishing requirements in the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: L.R. Anderson

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would prohibit licensed Kenai River sport fishing guides from being in a vessel on the Kenai River that is anchored, drifting, moving, or under power with fishing lines in the water on Sundays in July.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? During May, June and July, sport fishing from a registered guide vessel downstream of Skilak Lake is permitted only from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. In addition, downstream of the outlet of Skilak Lake, a person may not sport fish from a registered guide vessel on any Sunday from May 1 through July 31

On any Monday in May through July, except for Memorial Day, a person may not fish from a boat in the portion of the Kenai River from the outlet of Skilak Lake to the mouth of the river, except that unguided sport fishing from a non-motorized vessel is allowed on Mondays in May through July.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? A licensed Kenai River sport fishing guide's opportunity to fish recreationally would be reduced by 50% in July. For example in July of 2007 fishing from a registered guide vessel was prohibited for a total of ten days. If adopted, this regulation may be difficult to enforce. It is unknown if this proposal would be effective at preventing illegal guide activities.

BACKGROUND: Since 1985, during June and July, sport fishing from registered guide vessels has been permitted only from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (except for the years 1986 – 1988 when during July the time was 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.). In 2000, the daily time restrictions were extended to include the month of May. Guided anglers are also restricted from fishing on the Kenai River, downstream of Skilak Lake, from a registered guide vessel on Sundays or Mondays in May through July (except Memorial Day). These regulations are intended to restrict angling harvest of king salmon by reducing guided angling effort, provide non-guided anglers with hours free of competition with guided anglers and control angler congestion on the Kenai River. There is some amount of illegal guiding on the Kenai River, but the extent is not known.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. Although the intent of this proposal is to stop or discourage guided fishing,

which is already prohibited on Sunday, no violations have been issued for guiding on a Sunday by The Alaska Wildlife Troopers or Department of Natural Resources.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 311 - 5 AAC 57.140. Kenai River guiding and guided fishing requirements in the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Todd Moore

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would prohibit licensed Kenai River sport fishing guides from fishing on the Kenai River on Sundays.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? During May, June and July, sport fishing from a registered guide vessel downstream of Skilak Lake is permitted only from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. In addition, downstream of the outlet of Skilak Lake, a person may not sport fish from a registered guide vessel on any Sunday from May 1 through July 31

On any Monday in May through July, except for Memorial Day, a person may not fish from a boat in the portion of the Kenai River from the outlet of Skilak Lake to the mouth of the river, except that unguided sport fishing from a non-motorized vessel is allowed on Mondays in May through July.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? A licensed Kenai River sport fishing guide's opportunity to fish recreationally would be reduced by 50% in July. For example in July of 2007 fishing from a registered guide vessel was prohibited for a total of ten days. If adopted, this regulation may be difficult to enforce. It is unknown if this proposal would be effective at preventing illegal guide activities.

BACKGROUND: Since 1985, during June and July, sport fishing from registered guide vessels has been permitted only from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (except for the years 1986 – 1988 when during July the time was 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.). In 2000, the daily time restrictions were extended to include the month of May. Guided anglers are also restricted from fishing on the Kenai River, downstream of Skilak Lake, from a registered guide vessel on Sundays or Mondays in May through July (except Memorial Day). These regulations are intended to restrict angling harvest of king salmon by reducing guided angling effort, provide non-guided anglers with hours free of competition with guided anglers and control angler congestion on the Kenai River. There is some amount of illegal guiding on the Kenai River, but the extent is not known.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. Although the intent of this proposal is to stop or discourage guided fishing, which is already prohibited on Sunday, no violations have been issued for guiding on a Sunday by The Alaska Wildlife Troopers or Department of Natural Resources.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 312 - 5 AAC 57.140. Kenai River guiding and guided fishing requirements in the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai Area Fishermen's Coalition

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would prohibit licensed sport fishing guides from fishing from a boat on the Kenai River downstream of Skilak Lake during June and July during non-guide hours except with relatives who are within the second degree of kindred.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? During May, June and July, sport fishing from a registered guide vessel downstream of Skilak Lake is permitted only from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. In addition, downstream of the outlet of Skilak Lake, a person may not sport fish from a registered guide vessel on any Sunday from May 1 through July 31

On any Monday in May through July, except for Memorial Day, a person may not fish from a boat in the portion of the Kenai River from the outlet of Skilak Lake to the mouth of the river, except that unguided sport fishing from a non-motorized vessel is allowed on Mondays in May through July.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? A licensed sport fishing guide would not be able to fish, or be in a boat on the water with other people who are fishing on the Kenai River on Sundays, Mondays, and from Tuesday through Saturday from 6:00pm to 6:00am, unless the other people in the boat were of second degree of kindred. If adopted this regulation may be difficult to enforce. It is unknown if this proposal would be effective at preventing illegal guide activities.

BACKGROUND: Since 1985, during June and July, sport fishing from registered guide vessels has been permitted only from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (except for the years 1986 – 1988 when during July the time was 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.). In 2000, the daily time restrictions were extended to include the month of May. Guided anglers are also restricted from fishing on the Kenai River, downstream of Skilak Lake, from a registered guide vessel on Sundays or Mondays in May through July (except Memorial Day). These regulations are intended to restrict angling harvest of king salmon by reducing guided angling effort, provide non-guided anglers with hours free of competition with guided anglers, and control angler congestion on the Kenai River. There is some amount of illegal guiding on the Kenai River, but the extent is not known.

The second degree of kindred requirement works well in big game hunting by nonresidents because the wildlife Troopers only come across it once in a while.

Therefore the volume of checking to see if two people are related is low and manageable for hunting.

On the Kenai River there would potentially be almost 400 licensed guides on the river in the evenings and Sundays claiming that their partner is related and the workload of the rangers and the troopers would increase dramatically if they wanted to verify very many of the claims.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. The sheer numbers involved for enforcement may make this proposal very difficult for enforcement officers and thus have little effect on compliance.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 313 - 5 AAC 57.140. Kenai River guiding and guided fishing requirements in the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Dwight Kramer

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would limit Kenai River sport fishing guides to only one client or group of clients per day during July.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? During May, June and July, sport fishing from a registered guide vessel downstream of Skilak Lake is permitted only from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. In addition, downstream of the outlet of Skilak Lake, a person may not sport fish from a registered guide vessel on any Sunday or Monday from May 1 through July 31

During July, a vessel used for guided sport fishing on the Kenai River may not carry more than five persons, including the sport fishing guide, clients, and other passengers.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would essentially cap the maximum number of clients for a licensed guide per day at four. The catch, effort and harvest of king salmon by guided anglers may decline by an undetermined amount, initially. It could result in an increase in guide numbers as some operators may hire more guides to meet the demand.

BACKGROUND: Since 1985, during June and July, sport fishing from registered guide vessels has been permitted only from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (except for the years 1986 – 1988 when during July the time was 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.). In 2000, the daily time restrictions were extended to include the month of May. Guided anglers are also restricted from fishing on the Kenai River, downstream of Skilak Lake, from a registered guide vessel on Sundays or Mondays in May through July (except Memorial Day). These regulations are intended to restrict angling harvest of king salmon by reducing guided

angling effort, provide non-guided anglers with hours free of competition with guided anglers and control angler congestion on the Kenai River.

Sport fish guide logbook regulations require guides to complete a separate logbook data sheet for each unique trip. The number of Kenai River sport fishing guides who recorded 2 unique trips per day during the month of July was about 15% in both 2006 and 2007.

Beginning in 2002, guides operating on the Kasilof River were restricted to one group of clients per day and sport fishing from a registered guide vessel was prohibited during July downstream of the Sterling Highway Bridge.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 314 - 5 AAC 57.140. Kenai River guiding and guided fishing requirements in the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: L.R. Anderson

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would limit Kenai River sport fishing guides to only one trip per day during June and July.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? During May, June and July, sport fishing from a registered guide vessel downstream of Skilak Lake is permitted only from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. In addition, downstream of the outlet of Skilak Lake, a person may not sport fish from a registered guide vessel on any Sunday or Monday from May 1 through July 31

During July, a vessel used for guided sport fishing on the Kenai River may not carry more than five persons, including the sport fishing guide, clients, and other passengers.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would essentially cap the maximum number of clients for a licensed guide per day at four. The catch, effort and harvest of king salmon by guided anglers may decline by an undetermined amount, initially. Thereafter it could result in an increase in guide numbers as some operators may hire more guides to meet the demand.

BACKGROUND: Since 1985, during June and July, sport fishing from registered guide vessels has been permitted only from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (except for the years 1986 – 1988 when during July the time was 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.). In 2000, the daily time restrictions were extended to include the month of May. Guided anglers are also restricted from fishing on the Kenai River, downstream of Skilak Lake, from a registered

guide vessel on Sundays or Mondays in May through July (except Memorial Day). These regulations are intended to restrict angling harvest of king salmon by reducing guided angling effort, provide non-guided anglers with hours free of competition with guided anglers and control angler congestion on the Kenai River.

Sport fish guide logbook regulations require guides to complete a separate logbook data sheet for each unique trip. The number of Kenai River sport fishing guides who recorded 2 unique trips per day was 164 guides. A unique trip is the number of guides that completed 2 logbook sheets in a day between which a majority or 3 of 4 clients (75%) were different from morning to afternoon.

Beginning in 2002, guides operating on the Kasilof River were restricted to one group of clients per day. Sport fishing from a registered guide vessel is prohibited during July on the Kasilof River downstream of the Sterling Highway Bridge.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 315 - 5 AAC 57.140. Kenai River guiding and guided fishing requirements in the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Robert L. Ball Jr.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would prohibit sport fishing guides from operating on both the Kenai River and Kasilof River on the same day.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? During May, June and July, sport fishing from a registered guide vessel downstream of Skilak Lake is permitted only from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. In addition, downstream of the outlet of Skilak Lake, a person may not sport fish from a registered guide vessel on any Sunday or Monday from May 1 through July 31

On the Kasilof River downstream of the Sterling Highway Bridge, a person may not sport fish from a registered guide vessel on any Sunday in July. In addition, during any one day from January 1 through July 31, a fishing guide may guide only that client group or group of clients initially guided by the fishing guide that day; different or additional clients may not be guided.

Sport fishing guides are required to register with the Department of Natural Resources and become licensed with the Department of Fish and Game before guiding anglers. All guided sport fishing trips on both salt and fresh waters are required to be reported in a logbook and submitted to the department.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? The catch, effort and harvest of king and coho salmon by guided anglers may decline by an undetermined amount, initially. Thereafter it could result in an increase in guide numbers as some operators may hire more guides to meet the demand.

BACKGROUND: Since 1985, during June and July, sport fishing from registered guide vessels has been permitted only from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (except for the years 1986 – 1988 when during July the time was 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.). In 2000, the daily time restrictions were extended to include the month of May. Guided anglers are also restricted from fishing on the Kenai River, downstream of Skilak Lake, from a registered guide vessel on Sundays or Mondays in May through July (except Memorial Day). These regulations are intended to restrict angling harvest of king salmon by reducing guided angling effort, provide non-guided anglers with hours free of competition with guided anglers and control angler congestion on the Kenai River.

The number of guides that reported fishing on both the Kenai and Kasilof Rivers in the same year was 133 in 2006 and 128 in 2007. The number of guides that reported fishing on both the Kenai and Kasilof Rivers on the same day was 61 in 2006 and 47 in 2007. Beginning in 2002, guides operating on the Kasilof River were restricted to one group of clients per day and fishing from a registered guide vessel downstream of the Sterling Highway Bridge in July was prohibited.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 316 - 5 AAC 57.140. Kenai River guiding and guided fishing requirements in the Kenai River Drainage Area; 5 AAC 60.140. Freshwater guiding requirements for the Knik Arm Drainages Area; 5 AAC 61.140. Freshwater guiding requirements for the Susitna River Drainage Area; and 5 AAC 62.140. Freshwater guiding requirements for the West Cook Inlet Area.

PROPOSED BY: Dwight Kramer

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would limit licensed sport fishing guides to only one client or group of clients per day in all Upper Cook Inlet freshwaters.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? During May, June and July, sport fishing from a registered guide vessel downstream of Skilak Lake is permitted only from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. In addition, downstream of the outlet of Skilak Lake, a person may

not sport fish from a registered guide vessel on any Sunday or Monday from May 1 through July 31

During July, a vessel used for guided sport fishing on the Kenai River may not carry more than five persons, including the sport fishing guide, clients, and other passengers.

On the Kasilof River during any one day from January 1 through July 31, a fishing guide may guide only that client group or group of clients initially guided by the fishing guide that day; different or additional clients may not be guided.

Elsewhere in Cook Inlet in all freshwaters of the West Cook Inlet area, Susitna River drainage Knik Arm area, Anchorage Bowl area as well as in saltwaters of the Early Run King Salmon Special Harvest Area there is no limit on the number of clients or groups of clients a fishing guide may guide each day.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would essentially cap the maximum number of clients for a licensed guide per day. The catch, effort and harvest by guided anglers may decline by an undetermined amount, initially. It could result in an increase in guide numbers as some operators may hire more guides to meet the demand.

BACKGROUND: Since 1985, during June and July, sport fishing from registered guide vessels has been permitted only from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (except for the years 1986 – 1988 when during July the time was 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.). In 2000, the daily time restrictions were extended to include the month of May. Guided anglers are also restricted from fishing on the Kenai River, downstream of Skilak Lake, from a registered guide vessel on Sundays or Mondays in May through July (except Memorial Day). These regulations are intended to restrict angling harvest of king salmon by reducing guided angling effort, provide non-guided anglers with hours free of competition with guided anglers and control angler congestion on the Kenai River.

Sport fish guide logbook regulations require guides to complete a separate logbook data sheet for each unique trip. The number of Kenai River sport fishing guides who recorded 2 unique trips per day during the month of July was about 15% in both 2006 and 2007.

Beginning in 2002, guides operating on the Kasilof River were restricted to one group of clients per day and sport fishing from a registered guide vessel was prohibited during July downstream of the Sterling Highway Bridge.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 317 - 5 AAC 57.140. Kenai River guiding and guided fishing requirements in the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Robert L. Ball Jr.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would prohibit sport fishing guides from operating on both the Kenai and Kasilof rivers from May through July. Each year guides would have to decide which river they would conduct operations on.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? There are no regulations prohibiting sport fishing guides from operating on both the Kenai and Kasilof rivers.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Currently, guides may fish both rivers. During king salmon season a guide may take clients on a Kenai River power boat trip in the morning and a drift boat trip at the Kasilof River later that same day. On Monday's fishing from a registered guide vessel on the Kenai River is prohibited however it is allowed on the Kasilof River. Consequently, guides who typically fish the Kenai River may guide on the Kasilof River on Mondays. Moreover, some guides may fish the Kasilof River exclusively during the early-run king salmon fishery through June 30 and move to the Kenai River to fish the late-run king salmon during July. Under this proposal the guide industry would no longer have these various options. The catch, effort and harvest of king salmon by guided anglers may decline by an undetermined amount, initially. Thereafter it could result in an increase in guide numbers as some operators may hire more guides to meet the demand. This proposal may result in a loss of income to a sport fishing guide.

BACKGROUND: The number of guides that reported fishing on both the Kenai and Kasilof Rivers in the same year was 133 in 2006 and 128 in 2007.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 318 - 5 AAC 57.140. Kenai River guiding and guided fishing requirements in the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Kasilof River Land Owners Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would prohibit sport fishing guides from operating on both the Kenai and Kasilof rivers on the same day.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? There are no regulations prohibiting sport fishing guides from operating on both the Kenai and Kasilof rivers during the same day.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Currently, guides may fish both rivers and provide a diversity of fishing opportunities to clients. For example, during king salmon season a guide may take clients on a Kenai River power boat trip in the morning and a drift boat trip at the Kasilof River later that same day or vice versa. The catch, effort and harvest by guided anglers may decline by an undetermined amount, initially. Thereafter it could result in an increase in guide numbers as some operators may hire more guides to meet the demand.

BACKGROUND: The number of guides that reported fishing on both the Kenai and Kasilof Rivers on the same day was 61 in 2006 and 47 in 2007.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 319 - 5 AAC 57.140. Kenai River guiding and guided fishing requirements in the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Robert L. Ball Jr.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would prohibit a sport fishing guide that is registered with DNR to operate on the Kenai River from guiding on the Kasilof River when fishing from guided vessel on the Kenai River is closed or restricted in any way.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? During May, June and July, sport fishing from a registered guide vessel downstream of Skilak Lake is permitted only from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. In addition, downstream of the outlet of Skilak Lake, a person may not sport fish from a registered guide vessel on any Sunday from May 1 through July 31

On any Monday in May through July, except for Memorial Day, a person may not fish from a boat in the portion of the Kenai River from the outlet of Skilak Lake to the mouth of the river, except that unguided sport fishing from a non-motorized vessel is allowed on Mondays in May through July.

On the Kasilof River downstream of the Sterling Highway Bridge, a person may not sport fish from a registered guide vessel on any Sunday in July. In addition, during any one day from January 1 through July 31, a fishing guide may guide only that client group or group

of clients initially guided by the fishing guide that day; different or additional clients may not be guided.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? The catch, effort and harvest of king salmon by guided anglers may decline by an undetermined amount. The Kasilof River would likely have fewer guides operating on days that the Kenai River is closed to guided fishing.

BACKGROUND: The number of guides that reported fishing on both the Kenai and Kasilof Rivers in the same year was 133 in 2006 and 128 in 2007. The number of guides that reported fishing on both the Kenai and Kasilof Rivers on the same day was 61 in 2006 and 47 in 2007.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 320 - 5 AAC 56.122. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area.

PROPOSED BY: Kasilof River Land Owners Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would prohibit fishing on the Kasilof River from a registered guide vessel on Mondays, from January 1 through July 31.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? On the Kasilof River there is no prohibition to sport fishing from a registered guide vessel on Mondays. Sport fishing from a registered guide vessel is prohibited downstream of the Sterling Highway Bridge on Sundays in July.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would decrease guided angling opportunity during the king salmon season. The catch, effort and harvest of king salmon by guided anglers may decline by an undetermined amount. It would align closed guided fishing periods between the Kasilof and Kenai rivers during the king salmon season from July 1 through July 31.

BACKGROUND: The number of guides that reported fishing on both the Kenai and Kasilof Rivers in the same year was 133 in 2006 and 128 in 2007. The number of guides that reported fishing on both the Kenai and Kasilof Rivers on the same day was 61 in 2006 and 47 in 2007.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 327 - 5 AAC 56.122. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area.

PROPOSED BY: David Richards

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow licensed sport fishing guides to operate on the Kasilof River on Sundays.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? In the Kasilof River, downstream of the Sterling Highway Bridge, a person may not sport fish from a registered guide vessel on any Sunday in July.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? The catch, effort and harvest of king salmon by guided anglers may increase by an undetermined amount. The Kasilof River would likely have more guides operating on a day that the Kenai River is closed to guided fishing.

BACKGROUND: Beginning in 2000 sport fishing from a registered guide vessel on Sundays was prohibited during July downstream of the Sterling Highway Bridge. Further restrictions were implemented in 2002 when guides operating on the Kasilof River were restricted to one group of clients per day.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 321 - 5 AAC 57.140(b)(c). Kenai River guiding and guided fishing requirements in the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Brian Waters

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow sport fishing guides on the Kenai River to operate on Sundays in May and June, and eliminate guide hour restrictions in May.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? During May, June and July, sport fishing from a registered guide vessel downstream of Skilak Lake is permitted only from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. In addition, downstream of the outlet of Skilak Lake, a person may not sport fish from a registered guide vessel on any Sunday from May 1 through July 31

On any Monday in May through July, except for Memorial Day, a person may not fish from a boat in the portion of the Kenai River from the outlet of Skilak Lake to the mouth of the river, except that unguided sport fishing from a non-motorized vessel is allowed on Mondays in May through July.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would likely increase the amount of guided fishing participation and increase the guided catch and harvest of early-run Kenai River king salmon stocks and other fish species by an unknown number. This proposal may increase the harvest disparity between guided and unguided anglers in the Kenai River king salmon sport fishery.

BACKGROUND: Exploitation rates in the recreational harvest during the early-run average about 32% and the average total exploitation rate, including commercial harvest, for the late-run is approximately 48%. As a result, the board has adopted management plans structured to constrain the harvest of these king salmon stocks to sustainable levels while still providing for fishing opportunity. The management guidelines that the board has adopted through the years have closed specific areas of the river to all fishing, restricted certain areas of the river to shore fishing only, and imposed time and date closures for all guided and unguided boat anglers. In addition, the board has continued to address the harvest disparity that exists between guided and unguided anglers within the Kenai River king salmon sport fishery.

To create more parity between guided and unguided harvest and effort, the board placed daily time restrictions on guided anglers. Beginning in 1985, during June and July, sport fishing from registered guide vessels has been permitted only from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (except for the years 1986 – 1988 when during July the time was 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.). Since the early 1980's, guides have been prohibited from sport fishing while clients were present. Subsequent meetings have resulted in further restrictions placed upon guides and guided anglers.

In 2000, the daily time restrictions were extended to include the month of May. Guided anglers are also restricted from fishing on the Kenai River, downstream of Skilak Lake, from a registered guide vessel on Sundays or Mondays in May through July (except Memorial Day). These regulations are intended to restrict sport harvest of king salmon by reducing guided angling effort, provide non-guided anglers with hours free of competition with guided anglers and control angler congestion on the Kenai River.

Preliminary estimates from the 2007 season reveal that guided anglers accounted for 73% (1,934) of the early-run king salmon harvested from the Kenai River below the Soldotna Bridge, while expending 64% of the total fishing effort. Guided anglers harvested 6,405 (69%) of the total estimated late-run harvest of the preliminary estimated late-run harvest

of 9,258 king salmon harvested below the Soldotna Bridge. In the late-run guided anglers accounted for about 49% of the total king salmon fishing effort below the Soldotna Bridge. Over the past few years, from 2004 - 2007, guided anglers have accounted for an average of 73% of the total early-run harvest and 61% of the total late-run harvest while comprising 61% and 47% of the total early-and late-run fishing effort, respectively.

From 2004 – 2006 the average time to catch an early run king salmon was 14 hours for guided anglers and 24 hours for unguided anglers. During the late run guided anglers averaged a king salmon every 9 hours while the average for unguided anglers was a king salmon every 14 hours. During the 2007 early run, the average time to catch a king salmon for guided anglers was 15 hours compared to 27 hours for unguided anglers. For the late run on average guided anglers caught a king salmon every 16 hours, while the average for unguided anglers was 23 hours per king salmon.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 322 - 5 AAC 57.170. Kenai River Coho Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: David Richards

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow sport fishing guides on the Kenai River to operate on Mondays during coho salmon season (August 1 – October 31).

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? From July 31 or the end of the king salmon season, whichever is later, through October 31, sport fishing from a vessel that is registered with the Alaska Department of Natural Resources, division of parks as a sport fishing guide vessel is restricted as follows: downstream from the confluence of the Moose and Kenai Rivers, sport fishing on Mondays is prohibited; upstream from the confluence of the Moose and Kenai Rivers, sport fishing for coho salmon on Mondays is prohibited; any coho salmon caught must be released immediately without further harm.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would likely increase the amount of guided fishing participation and increase the guided catch and harvest of Kenai River coho salmon stocks and other fish species by an unknown, but sustainable number.

BACKGROUND: The Kenai River Coho Salmon Management Plan was first adopted in 1996 in response to a decline in coho salmon smolt abundance and increased harvest of returning adult coho salmon. A special Board of Fisheries meeting was convened in

1997 through a petition submitted by the department based on high Kenai River coho salmon harvests beginning in 1993 and 1994, which were thought to be unsustainable and declining Moose River (Kenai River tributary) coho salmon smolt counts. As a result of that meeting, restrictions affecting all users were put into regulation to conserve Kenai River coho salmon. Additional restrictive regulations were added to the plan from 1997-99. These regulations were an attempt to reduce the total harvest of Kenai River coho salmon by 20% from combined sport and commercial users and originally had a sunset clause of December 2002 and included:

1. The Kenai River coho salmon sport fishing season was established from July 1 – September 30.
2. Guides could not sport fish when guiding clients.

In 2000, a special Board of Fisheries meeting was convened through a petition submitted by the Governor based on low abundance of coho salmon throughout Cook Inlet. As a result of this meeting, more restrictions were put in place to conserve both Kenai River and Northern District coho salmon. The restrictions placed on the Kenai River coho salmon sport fishery included:

1. The bag and possession limit was reduced from 3 fish to 2 fish Cook Inlet-wide (excepting West Side Cook Inlet and terminal fisheries targeting hatchery fish). Anglers in the Kenai River must stop fishing for all species below the outlet of Skilak Lake for the remainder of the day after retaining a daily bag limit of 2 coho salmon.
2. Closing the Kenai River downstream of Skilak Lake from August 1-3 for coho salmon fishing.
3. Bait was prohibited in the Kenai River from October 1 to June 30.

The net result of the management plan on the Kenai River sport fishery was the overall reduction of coho salmon harvest. Currently the department does not manage the Kenai River coho salmon sport fishery in season based upon abundance as no escapement goal has been established for the Kenai River. There are no coho salmon escapement goals for the other streams in the Northern Kenai Peninsula Management Area where the limit for coho salmon was reduced from 3 daily and in possession to 2 daily and in possession.

Coho salmon fishing regulations were liberalized for the Kenai River by the Board of Fisheries in 2005. Changes resulted in a net gain in fishing time and area and also incorporated less restrictive fishing methods. Coho salmon fishing regulations for other Northern Kenai Peninsula Management Area streams were not changed. Several liberalizations allowed for the Kenai River coho salmon sport fishery included:

1. A 31 day season extension for coho salmon fishing within the Kenai River drainage: from September 30 to October 31.
2. Bait was allowed from July 1 through October 31 downstream of the Upper Killey River and bait with multiple hooks from August 1 through October 31 was allowed.

3. The August 1-3 coho salmon fishing closure downstream of Skilak Lake was repealed allowing a continuous season from July 1 through October 31.
4. The regulation prohibiting fishing after a person takes a bag limit of two coho salmon below Upper Killey River was reduced to below the Soldotna bridge allowing a person to continue to fish upstream of the Soldotna bridge.
5. Fishing from a guide vessel was allowed on Mondays for other species upstream of the confluence of the Moose and Kenai rivers.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 323 - 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area; and 5 AAC 57.140. Kenai River guiding and guided fishing requirements in the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: David Richards

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow sport fishing guides on the Kenai River guides to operate from drift boats on Mondays during July.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? During May, June and July, sport fishing from a registered guide vessel downstream of Skilak Lake is permitted only from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. In addition, downstream of the outlet of Skilak Lake, a person may not sport fish from a registered guide vessel on any Sunday from May 1 through July 31.

On any Monday in May through July, except for Memorial Day, a person may not fish from a boat in the portion of the Kenai River from the outlet of Skilak Lake to the mouth of the river, except that unguided sport fishing from a non-motorized vessel is allowed on Mondays in May through July.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would likely increase the amount of guided fishing participation and increase the guided harvest of Kenai River king salmon stocks and other fish species by an unknown number.

BACKGROUND: Since 1985, during June and July, sport fishing from registered guide vessels has been permitted only from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (except for the years 1986 – 1988 when during July the time was 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.). In 2000, the daily time restrictions were extended to include the month of May. Guided anglers are also restricted from fishing on the Kenai River, downstream of Skilak Lake, from a registered guide vessel on Sundays or Mondays in May through July (except Memorial Day).

These regulations are intended to restrict angling harvest of king salmon by reducing guided angling effort, provide non-guided anglers with hours free of competition with guided anglers and control angler congestion on the Kenai River.
Beginning in 1984, fishing from a vessel in the Kenai River downstream of Skilak Lake was prohibited on Mondays after July 5. In 1987 the prohibition from fishing from a vessel downstream of Skilak Lake on Mondays after July 5 was expanded to include Mondays during the months of May, June and July. In February 2002, the board allowed fishing on Mondays from unguided non-motorized vessels. Prior to 2002 the Monday closure in May and June was to provide relief from the effects of fishing effort such as over harvest of king salmon, angler and river user crowding, and habitat degradation caused by motorized vessels. In lieu of the stock status of early-run king salmon, the Monday closure was considered to occur at the expense of fishing effort because it unnecessarily reduced participation in the Kenai River sport fishery. Consequently, the board adopted the unguided non-motorized vessel drift boat only regulation to allow anglers the opportunity to fish on Monday while minimizing the concerns related to river user crowding, angler competition, and habitat degradation caused by motorized vessels.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 324 - 5 AAC 57.140. Kenai River guiding and guided fishing requirements in the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: David Richards

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allowed registered guide vessels to carry six persons, including the sport fishing guide, clients, and other passengers during July on the Kenai River.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? During July, a vessel used for guided sport fishing on the Kenai River may not carry more than five persons, including the fishing guide, clients, and other passengers.

Department of Natural Resources regulations prohibit a person from operating a motor powered boat on waters of the Kenai River Special Management Area, except for Kenai and Skilak Lakes, with more than six persons on board, including the operator, unless authorized by the director under a permit issued under 11 AAC 18. This regulation is not specific to sport fishing guides.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Should the additional person be a paying client, engaged in fishing for king salmon, the total guided fishing effort for king salmon in July could potentially increase by approximately 20%.

Such an increase in effort would also likely increase the total guided harvest of late-run Kenai River king salmon during July by some unknown number.

BACKGROUND: Since 1985, during June and July, sport fishing from registered guide vessels has been permitted only from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (except for the years 1986 – 1988 when during July the time was 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.). In 2000, the daily time restrictions were extended to include the month of May. Guided anglers are also restricted from fishing on the Kenai River, downstream of Skilak Lake, from a registered guide vessel on Sundays or Mondays in May through July (except Memorial Day). Regulations were adopted by the Board of Fisheries in 2000 limiting the total number occupants in guide vessel registered with ADNR Parks to no more than 5 persons, including the guide, clients and other passengers during the month of July. These regulations created more parity between guided and unguided anglers. They restricted guided effort and guided harvest of king salmon and provided non-guided anglers with hours free of competition with guided anglers and controlled angler congestion on the Kenai River.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. If this proposal were to result in substantial increases in the exploitation of Kenai River king salmon it may result in more frequent inseason management actions restricting the recreational fishery.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 325 - 5 AAC 57.140. Kenai River guiding and guided fishing requirements in the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Mel Erickson

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would prohibit unguided angling for king salmon one day a week during July on the Kenai River.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? During May, June and July, sport fishing from a registered guide vessel downstream of Skilak Lake is permitted only from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. In addition, downstream of the outlet of Skilak Lake, a person may not sport fish from a registered guide vessel on any Sunday from May 1 through July 31

On any Monday in May through July, except for Memorial Day, a person may not fish from a boat in the portion of the Kenai River from the outlet of Skilak Lake to the mouth of the river, except that unguided sport fishing from a non-motorized vessel is allowed on Mondays in May through July.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Unguided angler harvest and effort would be eliminated during one day per week and guided angler

harvest and effort may increase an unknown amount due to the decreased competition with unguided anglers fishing on the "guided anglers only" day. The proposal did not specify if guided angling would continue to be restricted to the current 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. operating hours.

BACKGROUND: The average total exploitation rate, including commercial harvest, for Kenai River late-run king salmon is approximately 48%. As a result, the board has adopted a management plan structured to constrain the harvest of these king salmon stocks to sustainable levels while still providing for fishing opportunity. The management guidelines that the board has adopted through the years have closed specific areas of the river to all fishing, restricted certain areas of the river to shore fishing only and imposed time and date closures for all guided and unguided boat anglers. In addition, the board has continued to address the harvest disparity that exists between guided and unguided anglers within the Kenai River king salmon sport fishery.

To create more parity between guided and unguided harvest and effort, the board placed daily time restrictions on guided anglers. Beginning in 1985, during June and July, sport fishing from registered guide vessels has been permitted only from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (except for the years 1986 – 1988 when during July the time was 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.).

In 2000, the daily time restrictions were extended to include the month of May. Guided anglers are also restricted from fishing on the Kenai River, downstream of Skilak Lake, from a registered guide vessel on Sundays or Mondays in May through July (except Memorial Day). These regulations are intended to restrict sport harvest of king salmon by reducing guided angling effort, provide non-guided anglers with hours free of competition with guided anglers and control angler congestion on the Kenai River. Prior to the 2002 season, fishing on Mondays in May and June was prohibited from any vessel. In February 2002, the board allowed fishing on Mondays from unguided non-motorized vessels.

Preliminary estimates from the 2007 season show that guided anglers harvested 6,405 (69%) of the total estimated late-run harvest of the late-run harvest of 9,258 king salmon harvested below the Soldotna Bridge. In the late-run guided anglers accounted for about 49% of the total king salmon fishing effort below the Soldotna Bridge. Over the past few years, from 2004 - 2007, guided anglers have accounted for an average of 61% of the total late-run king salmon harvest while comprising 47% of the total late-run fishing effort, respectively.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 326 - 5 AAC 57.140. Kenai River guiding and guided fishing requirements in the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Mel Erickson

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow sport fishing from a registered guide vessel seven days per week, although any individual sport fishing guide would only be able to operate five days per week.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? During May, June and July, sport fishing from a registered guide vessel downstream of Skilak Lake is permitted only from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. In addition, downstream of the outlet of Skilak Lake, a person may not sport fish from a registered guide vessel on any Sunday from May 1 through July 31

On any Monday in May through July, except for Memorial Day, a person may not fish from a boat in the portion of the Kenai River from the outlet of Skilak Lake to the mouth of the river, except that unguided sport fishing from a non-motorized vessel is allowed on Mondays in May through July.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal could distribute the total available guided fishing opportunity within each week during which they could provide sport fishing guide services to anglers on the Kenai River. This proposal would not increase the total guided boat angler effort during May, June and July because guides are currently limited to guiding clients for five days per week, but it would eliminate the two days each week that are available to anglers to fish without the presence of sport fishing guide activities.

BACKGROUND: The Kenai River king salmon recreational fisheries are heavily exploited. The average exploitation rate is 32% during the early-run and the average total exploitation rate, including commercial harvest, for the late-run is approximately 48%. As a result, the board has adopted management plans structured to constrain the harvest of these king salmon stocks to sustainable levels while still providing for fishing opportunity. The management guidelines that the board has adopted through the years have closed specific areas of the river to all fishing, restricted certain areas of the river to shore fishing only and imposed time and date closures for all guided and unguided boat anglers. In addition, the board has continued to address the harvest disparity that exists between guided and unguided anglers within the Kenai River king salmon sport fishery.

To create more parity between guided and unguided harvest and effort, the board placed daily time restrictions on guided anglers. Beginning in 1985, during June and July, sport fishing from registered guide vessels has been permitted only from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (except for the years 1986 – 1988 when during July the time was 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.). For the 1989-1999 seasons, the board established operating hours for guides of 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. consistently for June and July. Since the early 1980's, guides have been prohibited from sport fishing while clients were present. Subsequent meetings have resulted in further restrictions placed upon guides and the guided angler.

In 2000, the daily time restrictions were extended to include the month of May. Guided anglers are also restricted from fishing on the Kenai River, downstream of Skilak Lake, from a registered guide vessel on Sundays or Mondays in May through July (except Memorial Day). These regulations are intended to restrict sport harvest of king salmon by reducing guided angling effort, provide non-guided anglers with hours free of competition with guided anglers and control angler congestion on the Kenai River.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. This regulation would be unenforceable because it would require an extensive record and tracking system to implement, and every guide would have to be checked each day.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 328 - 5 AAC 57.140. Kenai River guiding and guided fishing requirements in the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would align ADF&G regulations with Dept. of Natural Resources regulations which prohibit fishing by sport fishing guides when clients are present, on the Kenai River below the Warren Ames Bridge in Kenai River from May through July.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? From July 31 or the end of the king salmon season, whichever is later, through October 31, a person who is a sport fishing guide may not sport fish while a client is present or is within the guide's control or responsibility, except when guiding a client with a disability.

Within DNR regulations (11 AAC 18.030 Noncompetitive Park Use Permits for Commercial Activities) the permittee or the permittee's agents or employees may not fish or allow the permittee's support staff or employees to fish from a vehicle being used for activities authorized by this section in the Kenai River Special Management Area, 1 mile below the Warren Ames Bridge (river mile 4), up to and including Kenai Lake, during the months of May, June, and July while clients are present.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would place an existing DNR regulation into Fish and Game regulations and extend the restriction an additional 4 miles to the mouth of the Kenai River.

BACKGROUND: This proposal is housekeeping in nature but does extend the regulation into the area of the Kenai River from Warren Ames Bridge downstream to the mouth of the river.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department submitted and **SUPPORTS** this proposal, however, the department recommends that this proposal be modified to apply only to sport fishing from a registered guide vessel. The department believes that moving this regulation within Fish and Game codifieds simplifies the law for enforcement agents and extends the regulation into waters outside of the DNR designated Kenai River Special Management Area and makes regulations consistent between departments and throughout the entire river.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 329 - 5 AAC 57.140. Kenai River guiding and guided fishing requirements in the Kenai River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would align ADF&G regulations to those found in Dept. of Natural Resources which allow for deregistering of guide vessels before the end of the calendar year in which they are registered.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current ADF&G regulations do not allow a guide vessel to be deregistered before the end of the calendar year in which it was registered as a commercial operator.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would allow guide vessel owners to sport fish from commercially registered vessels in the same calendar year.

BACKGROUND: This proposal is housekeeping in nature because it allows a buyer or the guide to deregister a guide vessel the same year it was registered so that it may be used for non-guided fishing activities.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department submitted and **SUPPORTS** this proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

COMMITTEE G: Northern Cook Inlet Sport Salmon Fisheries (Total proposals: 29)

Susitna River Salmon: 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343
West Cook Inlet Salmon: 344
Knik Arm Salmon: 345, 346, 347, 348
Resident Species: 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355
Northern Cook Inlet Personal Use: 356, 357, 358

SUSITNA RIVER SALMON SPORT FISHERIES

PROPOSAL 330 - 5 AAC 61.112(5)(A). Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for Unit 1 of the Susitna River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would restrict the number of days open to king salmon fishing on Alexander Creek by creating a weekend only fishery.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? King salmon may be taken in Alexander Creek from its mouth upstream to ADF&G regulatory markers located 400 feet upstream of its confluence with Trail Creek from January 1-June 30; bag and possession limit is one king salmon 20 inches or greater in length; after taking and retaining a king salmon 20 inches or greater in length, a person may not sport fish for king salmon on that same day.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would reduce the harvest and effort for king salmon on Alexander Creek by an unknown amount. It is unknown if this action will be sufficient to meet the escapement goal and assure the sustainability of king salmon in Alexander Creek.

BACKGROUND: The sport harvest of king salmon in Alexander Creek is no longer sustainable at current levels. It is likely that Alexander Creek lost much of its productive king salmon rearing areas as a result of northern pike infestation and predation on juvenile king salmon. In the mid 80's to late 90's, between 1,500 and 4,000 king salmon were counted in the mainstem of Alexander Creek. In 2007 less than two hundred king salmon were observed in this section of river, most of which were holding below Sucker Creek and were likely Sucker Creek fish. Alexander Creek is a slow meandering weedy stream with many back water sloughs, oxbows channels and shallow interconnecting lakes and ponds providing ideal spawning and rearing habit for northern pike.

The department has conducted aerial surveys to index the number of spawning king salmon on Alexander Creek since 1978. The escapement goal range established by the department

for king salmon escapements into Alexander Creek is between 2,100 and 6,000 fish. In four of the past six years (2002-2007), Alexander Creek has failed to achieve the escapement goal, and for two of those years escapements were only slightly above the lower end of the goal. During 2006 and 2007, the escapement of king salmon into Alexander Creek were the lowest on record with only 885 and 460 spawning fish respectively.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department submitted and now **OPPOSES** this proposal. The 2007 escapement count for king salmon on Alexander Creek was only half that of the previous years count (885) which at the time was the lowest count on record for this system and well below the lower end of the escapement goal range of 2,100 to 6,000 fish. Given the poor escapements to this system in recent years it is warranted to implement more restrictive regulations than what the department has proposed.

COST ANALYSIS: The Department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 331 - 5 AAC 61.112(5)(A). Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for Unit 1 of the Susitna River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Francis Buckwalter

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would close king salmon sport fishing on Alexander Creek for four years.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? King salmon may be taken in Alexander Creek from its mouth upstream to ADF&G regulatory markers located 400 feet upstream of its confluence with Trail Creek from January 1-June 30; bag and possession limit is one king salmon 20 inches or greater in length; after taking and retaining a king salmon 20 inches or greater in length, a person may not sport fish for king salmon on that same day.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would reduce the harvest and effort for king salmon on Alexander Creek by an unknown amount. It is unknown if this action will be sufficient to meet the escapement goal and assure the sustainability of king salmon in Alexander Creek.

BACKGROUND: The sport harvest of king salmon in Alexander Creek is no longer sustainable at current levels. It is likely that Alexander Creek lost much of its productive king salmon rearing areas as a result of northern pike infestation and predation on juvenile king salmon. In the mid 80's to late 90's, between 1,500 and 4,000 king salmon were counted in the mainstem of Alexander Creek. In 2007 less than two hundred king salmon were observed in this section of river, most of which were holding below Sucker Creek and were likely Sucker Creek fish. Alexander Creek is a slow meandering weedy

stream with many back water sloughs, oxbows channels and shallow interconnecting lakes and ponds providing ideal spawning and rearing habit for northern pike.

The department has conducted aerial surveys to index the number of spawning king salmon on Alexander Creek since 1978. The escapement goal range established by the department for king salmon escapements into Alexander Creek is between 2,100 and 6,000 fish. In four of the past six years (2002-2007), Alexander Creek has failed to achieve the escapement goal, and for two of those years escapements were only slightly above the lower end of the goal. During 2006 and 2007, the escapement of king salmon into Alexander Creek were the lowest on record with only 885 and 460 spawning fish respectively.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** this proposal with the modification that it not be reopened automatically in four years. The 2007 escapement count for king salmon on Alexander Creek was only half that of the previous years count (885) which at the time was the lowest count on record for this system and well below the lower end of the escapement goal range of 2,100 to 6,000 fish. The department recommends Alexander Creek be closed to king salmon fishing until this stock rebuilds

COST ANALYSIS: The Department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 332 - 5 AAC 61.112(5)(A). Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for Unit 1 of the Susitna River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Kris Draper

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would close king salmon sport fishing on Alexander Creek for a period of three or four years.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? King salmon in Alexander Creek from its mouth upstream to ADF&G regulatory markers located 400 feet upstream of its confluence with Trail Creek may be taken from January 1-June 30; bag and possession limit is one king salmon 20 inches or greater in length; after taking and retaining a king salmon 20 inches or greater in length, a person may not sport fish for king salmon on that same day.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would reduce the harvest and effort for king salmon on Alexander Creek by an unknown amount. It is unknown if this action will be sufficient to meet the escapement goal and protect the sustainability of king salmon in Alexander Creek.

BACKGROUND: The sport harvest of king salmon from Alexander Creek is no longer sustainable at current levels. It is likely that Alexander Creek lost much of its productive king salmon rearing areas as a result of northern pike infestation and predation on

juvenile king salmon. In the mid 80's to late 90's, between 1,500 and 4,000 fish were counted in the mainstem of Alexander Creek. In 2007 less than two hundred king salmon were observed in this section of river, most of which were holding below Sucker Creek and were likely Sucker Creek fish. Alexander Creek is a slow meandering weedy stream with many back water sloughs, oxbows channels and shallow interconnecting lakes and ponds providing ideal spawning and rearing habit for northern pike.

The department has conducted aerial surveys to index the number of spawning king salmon on Alexander Creek since 1978. The escapement goal range established by the department for king salmon escapements into Alexander Creek is between 2,100 and 6,000 fish. In the four of the past six years (2002-2007), Alexander Creek has failed to achieve the escapement goal, and for two of those years escapements were only slightly above the lower end of the goal. During 2006 and 2007, the escapement of king salmon into Alexander Creek were the lowest on record with only 885 and 460 spawning fish respectively.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** this proposal. The 2007 escapement count for king salmon on Alexander Creek was only half that of the previous years count (885) which at the time was the lowest count on record for this system and well below the lower end of the escapement goal range of 2,100 to 6,000 fish. The department recommends Alexander Creek be closed to king salmon fishing for at least one Cook Inlet Board cycle when more escapement information will become available.

COST ANALYSIS: The Department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 333 - 5 AAC 61.112(5)(A). Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for Unit 1 of the Susitna River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Ron Stark

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would close king salmon sport fishing on Alexander Creek for a few years.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? King salmon in Alexander Creek from its mouth upstream to ADF&G regulatory markers located 400 feet upstream of its confluence with Trail Creek may be taken from January 1-June 30; bag and possession limit is one king salmon 20 inches or greater in length; after taking and retaining a king salmon 20 inches or greater in length, a person may not sport fish for king salmon on that same day.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would reduce the harvest and effort for king salmon on Alexander Creek by an unknown amount. It is unknown if this action will be sufficient to meet the escapement goal and protect the sustainability of king salmon in Alexander Creek.

BACKGROUND: The sport harvest of king salmon from Alexander Creek is no longer sustainable at current levels. It is likely that Alexander Creek lost much of its productive king salmon rearing areas as a result of northern pike infestation and predation on juvenile king salmon. In the mid 80's to late 90's, between 1,500 and 4,000 fish were counted in the mainstem of Alexander Creek. In 2007 less than two hundred king salmon were observed in this section of river, most of which were holding below Sucker Creek and were likely Sucker Creek fish. Alexander Creek is a slow meandering weedy stream with many back water sloughs, oxbows channels and shallow interconnecting lakes and ponds providing ideal spawning and rearing habit for northern pike.

The department has conducted aerial surveys to index the number of spawning king salmon on Alexander Creek since 1978. The escapement goal range established by the department for king salmon escapements into Alexander Creek is between 2,100 and 6,000 fish. In the four of the past six years (2002-2007), Alexander Creek has failed to achieve the escapement goal, and for two of those years escapements were only slightly above the lower end of the goal. During 2006 and 2007, the escapement of king salmon into Alexander Creek were the lowest on record with only 885 and 460 spawning fish respectively.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** this proposal. The 2007 escapement count for king salmon on Alexander Creek was only half that of the previous years count (885) which at the time was the lowest count on record for this system and well below the lower end of the escapement goal range of 2,100 to 6,000 fish. The department recommends Alexander Creek be closed to king salmon fishing for at least one Cook Inlet Board cycle when more escapement information will become available.

COST ANALYSIS: The Department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 334 - 5 AAC 61.112(5)(A). Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for Unit 1 of the Susitna River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Gary Bell

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would close king salmon sport fishing on Alexander Creek for an unknown number of years until the fish are able to withstand a harvest.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? King salmon in Alexander Creek from its mouth upstream to ADF&G regulatory markers located 400 feet upstream of its confluence with Trail Creek may be taken from January 1-June 30; bag and possession limit is one king salmon 20 inches or greater in length; after taking and retaining a king salmon 20 inches or greater in length, a person may not sport fish for king salmon on that same day.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would reduce the harvest and effort for king salmon on Alexander Creek by an unknown amount. It is unknown if this action will be sufficient to meet the escapement goal and protect the sustainability of king salmon in Alexander Creek.

BACKGROUND: The sport harvest of king salmon from Alexander Creek is no longer sustainable at current levels. It is likely that Alexander Creek lost much of its productive king salmon rearing areas as a result of northern pike infestation and predation on juvenile king salmon. In the mid 80's to late 90's, between 1,500 and 4,000 fish were counted in the mainstem of Alexander Creek. In 2007 less than two hundred king salmon were observed in this section of river, most of which were holding below Sucker Creek and were likely Sucker Creek fish. Alexander Creek is a slow meandering weedy stream with many back water sloughs, oxbows channels and shallow interconnecting lakes and ponds providing ideal spawning and rearing habit for northern pike.

The department has conducted aerial surveys to index the number of spawning king salmon on Alexander Creek since 1978. The escapement goal range established by the department for king salmon escapements into Alexander Creek is between 2,100 and 6,000 fish. In the four of the past six years (2002-2007), Alexander Creek has failed to achieve the escapement goal, and for two of those years escapements were only slightly above the lower end of the goal. During 2006 and 2007, the escapement of king salmon into Alexander Creek were the lowest on record with only 885 and 460 spawning fish respectively.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** this proposal. The 2007 escapement count for king salmon on Alexander Creek was only half that of the previous years count (885) which at the time was the lowest count on record for this system and well below the lower end of the escapement goal range of 2,100 to 6,000 fish. The department recommends Alexander Creek be closed to king salmon fishing for at least one Cook Inlet Board cycle when more escapement information will become available.

COST ANALYSIS: The Department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 335 - 5 AAC 61.112. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for Unit 1 of the Susitna River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Matanuska Valley Advisory Committee.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would eliminate the night-time fishing closure and allow fishing 24 hours per day in Unit 1 of the Susitna River drainage.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? In waters open to king salmon fishing, including the Deshka River, fishing is not allowed between 11:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. May 15 – July 13.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would increase the harvest of king salmon ascending Unit 1 tributaries as well as those passing through Unit 1 fisheries to ascend tributaries in management units further upstream (mixed stock fisheries at the mouths of Alexander and Deshka Rivers and tributaries along west and east side Susitna River within Unit 1).

BACKGROUND: The department has historically monitored escapement in Unit 1 by aerial index on both Alexander Creek and the Deshka River on an annual basis. A weir has been used to count the actual escapement on the Deshka River since 1995. The Deshka River supports the largest runs of king salmon in Northern and West Cook Inlet Management Area (N&WCIMA). Alexander Creek has historically supported a modest run of king salmon. Poor king salmon returns to N&WCIMA waters in the early 1990s prompted the board to enact area- wide restrictions in 1995, most of which are still in effect today. King salmon sport fishing restrictions in 1995 included elimination of bait, guide restrictions, time and area restrictions, catch and release restrictions and complete closures. King salmon returns across the N&WCIMA rebounded beginning in 1997. Escapement goals have been met or exceeded on the Deshka River since 1997. The department began liberalizing the Deshka River king salmon fishery as returns grew through emergency orders which allowed use of bait, eliminated the time restriction, and increased the bag and possession limit. Beginning in 2005 the use of bait beginning May 15 was allowed by regulation. At the present time an area-wide time restriction, allowing anglers to fish only between 6 a.m. and 11 p.m., is the only restriction in effect dating to restrictions imposed in 1995.

The 2007 Deshka River king salmon escapement was near the midpoint of the biological escapement goal of 13,000-28,000 fish. The outlook for the 2008 king salmon run is far below average, with a projected total run of 20,300 fish. If realized, it would rank 27th out of 30 years and be well below the 1979-2007 average run of 38,700 fish. The harvest projection for 2008 is 7,500 fish, and if realized, would result in a 2008 escapement of about 12,800 fish, just below the lower end of the escapement goal range of 13,000 to 28,000 fish.

Aside from Alexander Creek and the Deshka River, king salmon enter the mouths of many small tributaries within Unit 1 of the Susitna River while enroute to spawning tributaries further upstream (Units 2 – 6). Run strength and stock composition of king salmon in many of the smaller systems are largely unknown while many of the eastside tributaries are already at or above maximum harvest levels. Historically, 200-300 king salmon had spawned in Fish Creek (Kroto Slough). The current status of this stock is presently unknown, but is believed to be greatly diminished due to northern pike invasion and predation.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. Current management practices within Unit 1 have demonstrated achievement of sustainable yields through years of stock recovery, from the poor returns experienced in the early 1990s to present. The department already has emergency order authority to liberalize or restrict sport fishing regulations if salmon returns are expected to fall short of or exceed escapement goal ranges.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 336 - 5 AAC 61.112. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for Unit 1 of the Susitna River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Matanuska Valley Advisory Committee.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would eliminate bait restrictions on king salmon fisheries within Unit 1 of the Susitna River.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? From September 1 through July 13, only unbaited, artificial lures are allowed on the Susitna River from its mouth to the confluence with the Deshka River (Unit 1).

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would increase the harvest of king salmon ascending Unit 1 tributaries as well as those passing through Unit 1 fisheries to ascend tributaries in management units further upstream (mixed stock mouth fisheries of Alexander and Deshka Rivers and tributaries along west and east side Susitna River within Unit 1).

BACKGROUND: The department has historically monitored escapement in Unit 1 by aerial index on both Alexander Creek and the Deshka River on an annual basis. A weir has been used to count the actual escapement on the Deshka River since 1995. The Deshka River supports the largest runs of king salmon in Northern and West Cook Inlet Management Area (N&WCIMA). Alexander Creek has historically supported a modest run of king salmon. Poor king salmon returns to N&WCIMA waters in the early 1990s prompted the board to enact severe area- wide restrictions in 1995, most of which are still in effect today. King salmon sport fishing restrictions in 1995 included elimination of bait, guide restriction, time and area restriction, catch and release restriction and complete closures. King salmon returns across the N&WCIMA rebounded beginning in 1997. Escapement goals have been met or exceeded on the Deshka River since 1997. The department began liberalizing the Deshka River king salmon fishery as returns grew through emergency orders which allowed use of bait, eliminated the time restriction, and increased the bag and possession limit. Beginning in 2005 the use of bait beginning May 15 was allowed by regulation. At the present time an area-wide time restriction, allowing

anglers to fish only between 6 a.m. and 11 p.m., is the only restriction in effect dating to restrictions imposed in 1995.

The 2007 Deshka River king salmon escapement was near the midpoint of the biological escapement goal of 13,000-28,000 fish. The outlook for the 2008 king salmon run is far below average, with a projected total run of 20,300 fish. If realized, it would rank 27th out of 30 years and be well below the 1979-2007 average run of 38,700 fish. The harvest projection for 2008 is 7,500 fish, and if realized, would result in a 2008 escapement of about 12,800 fish, just below the lower end of the escapement goal range of 13,000 to 28,000 fish.

Aside from Alexander Creek and the Deshka River, king salmon enter the mouths of many small tributaries within Unit 1 of the Susitna River while enroute to spawning tributaries further upstream (Units 2 – 6). Run strength and stock composition of king salmon in many of the smaller systems are largely unknown while many of the eastside tributaries are already at or above maximum harvest levels. Historically, 200-300 king salmon had spawned in Fish Creek (Kroto Slough). The current status of this stock is presently unknown, but is believed to be greatly diminished due to northern pike invasion and predation.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. Current management practices within Unit 1 have demonstrated achievement of sustainable yields through years of stock recovery, from the poor returns experienced in the early 1990s to present. The department already has emergency order authority to liberalize or restrict sport fishing regulations if salmon returns are expected to fall short of or exceed escapement goal ranges.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 337 - 5 AAC 61.112. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for Unit 1 of the Susitna River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Andy Couch

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would increase the bag limit of king salmon on the Deshka River from 1 fish to two fish.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? On the Deshka River, the bag and possession limit for king salmon 20 inches or greater in length is 1 per day and 2 in possession.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would increase the harvest and effort of king salmon by an unknown amount. It's

possible in years of below average returns that the fishery would be restricted or closed to achieve the escapement goal.

BACKGROUND: The department historically monitored escapement in the Deshka River by aerial index on an annual basis. A weir has been used to count the actual escapement on the Deshka River since 1995. The Deshka River supports the largest runs of king salmon in Northern and West Cook Inlet Management Area (N&WCIMA). Poor king salmon returns to N&WCIMA waters in the early 1990s prompted the board to enact severe area- wide restrictions in 1995, most of which are still in effect today. King salmon sport fishing restrictions in 1995 included elimination of bait, guide restriction, time and area restriction, catch and release restriction and complete closures. King salmon returns across the N&WCIMA rebounded beginning in 1997. Escapement goals have been met or exceeded on the Deshka River since 1997. The department began liberalizing the Deshka River king salmon fishery as returns grew through emergency orders which allowed use of bait, eliminated the time restriction, and increased the bag and possession limit. Beginning in 2005 the use of bait beginning May 15 was allowed by regulation. At the present time an area-wide time restriction, allowing anglers to fish only between 6 a.m. and 11 p.m., is the only restriction in effect dating to restrictions imposed in 1995.

The 2007 Deshka River king salmon escapement was near the midpoint of the biological escapement goal of 13,000-28,000 fish. The outlook for the 2008 king salmon run is far below average, with a projected total run of 20,300 fish. If realized, it would rank 27th out of 30 years and be well below the 1979-2007 average run of 38,700 fish. The harvest projection for 2008 is 7,500 fish, and if realized, would result in a 2008 escapement of about 12,800 fish, just below the lower end of the escapement goal range of 13,000 to 28,000 fish.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. Current management practices have demonstrated achievement of sustainable yields and the flexibility to increase harvest opportunity inseason when warranted. The department already has emergency order authority to liberalize or restrict sport fishing regulations if salmon returns are expected to fall short of or exceed escapement goal ranges.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery

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PROPOSAL 338 - 5 AAC 61.112. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for Unit 1 of the Susitna River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Andy Couch

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would eliminate the night-time fishing closure on the Deshka River and allow fishing 24 hours per day.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Deshka River is open to king salmon fishing January 1 through July 13 only between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would increase the harvest and fishing opportunity of king salmon.

BACKGROUND: The department historically monitored escapement in the Deshka River by aerial index on an annual basis. A weir has been used to count the actual escapement on the Deshka River since 1995. The Deshka River supports the largest runs of king salmon in Northern and West Cook Inlet Management Area (N&WCIMA). Poor king salmon returns to N&WCIMA waters in the early 1990s prompted the board to enact severe area- wide restrictions in 1995, most of which are still in effect today. King salmon sport fishing restrictions in 1995 included elimination of bait, guide restriction, time and area restriction, catch and release restriction and complete closures. King salmon returns across the N&WCIMA rebounded beginning in 1997. Escapement goals have been met or exceeded on the Deshka River since 1997. The department began liberalizing the Deshka River king salmon fishery as returns grew through emergency orders which allowed use of bait, eliminated the time restriction, and increased the bag and possession limit. Beginning in 2005 the use of bait beginning May 15 was allowed by regulation. At the present time an area-wide time restriction, allowing anglers to fish only between 6 a.m. and 11 p.m., is the only restriction in effect dating to restrictions imposed in 1995.

The 2007 Deshka River king salmon escapement was near the midpoint of the biological escapement goal of 13,000-28,000 fish. The outlook for the 2008 king salmon run is far below average, with a projected total run of 20,300 fish. If realized, it would rank 27th out of 30 years and be well below the 1979-2007 average run of 38,700 fish. The harvest projection for 2008 is 7,500 fish, and if realized, would result in a 2008 escapement of about 12,800 fish, just below the lower end of the escapement goal range of 13,000 to 28,000 fish.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. Current management practices within Unit 1 have demonstrated achievement of sustainable yields through years of stock recovery, from the poor returns experienced in the early 1990s to present. The department already has emergency order authority to liberalize or restrict sport fishing regulations if salmon returns are expected to fall short of or exceed escapement goal ranges.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery

PROPOSAL 339 - 5 AAC 61.112. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for Unit 1 of the Susitna River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Fishtale River Guides.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would establish a trigger point for extending the king salmon season beyond the current season closing date for the Deshka River. Management of the sport fishery would be tied to Deshka River weir fish counts. If the weir count surpassed the midpoint of the escapement goal range (20,500 king salmon) by July 10, then the king salmon season would be extended on the lower seven miles of river below the weir until July 31.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Deshka River is open to king salmon fishing January 1 through July 13 from the mouth upstream 17 miles and all waters within a ½ mile radius of it confluence with the Susitna River. The remainder of the drainage is closed to king salmon fishing

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would increase harvest of king salmon by an unknown amount. would allow harvesting king salmon when they are actively spawning in the lower 7 miles of the Deshka River.

BACKGROUND: The department historically monitored escapement in the Deshka River by aerial index on an annual basis. A weir has been used to count the actual escapement on the Deshka River since 1995. The Deshka River supports the largest runs of king salmon in Northern and West Cook Inlet Management Area (N&WCIMA). Poor king salmon returns to N&WCIMA waters in the early 1990s prompted the board to enact severe area- wide restrictions in 1995, most of which are still in effect today. King salmon sport fishing restrictions in 1995 included elimination of bait, guide restriction, time and area restriction, catch and release restriction and complete closures. King salmon returns across the N&WCIMA rebounded beginning in 1997. Escapement goals have been met or exceeded on the Deshka River since 1997. The department began liberalizing the Deshka River king salmon fishery as returns grew through emergency orders which allowed use of bait, eliminated the time restriction, and increased the bag and possession limit. Beginning in 2005 the use of bait beginning May 15 was allowed by regulation. At the present time an area-wide time restriction, allowing anglers to fish only between 6 a.m. and 11 p.m., is the only restriction in effect dating to restrictions imposed in 1995.

The 2007 Deshka River king salmon escapement was near the midpoint of the biological escapement goal of 13,000-28,000 fish. The outlook for the 2008 king salmon run is far below average, with a projected total run of 20,300 fish. If realized, it would rank 27th out of 30 years and be well below the 1979-2007 average run of 38,700 fish. The harvest projection for 2008 is 7,500 fish, and if realized, would result in a 2008 escapement of about 12,800 fish, just below the lower end of the escapement goal range of 13,000 to 28,000 fish.

Run timing of king salmon on the Deshka River is consistent with 98% of the annual run past the weir, located at river mile 7, by July 16. The vast majority of king salmon are in a late state of maturation and are actively spawning during mid to late July. While the majority of spawning occurs upstream of the weir, some king salmon utilize the approximate 5 miles of river below the weir for spawning. During 2005, the projection of king salmon passage through the Deshka River weir indicated that the upper limit of the escapement goal was going to be exceeded; this prompted the department to issue an emergency order to extend the king salmon season on the Deshka River through July 31. Due to concerns about fishing on spawning king salmon populations coupled with resident fish concerns, only the lower two miles of the river were liberalized by the emergency order.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. A trigger point based plan stipulating inseason management actions would add unnecessary complexity to regulations that already provide the department with the tools necessary to manage the fishery. The department already has emergency order authority to liberalize or restrict sport fishing regulations if salmon returns are expected to fall short of or exceed escapement goal ranges. The season ending date of July 13 serves as the primary function to protect spawning king salmon in the lower Deshka River.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery

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PROPOSAL 340 - 5 AAC 61.114. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for Unit 2 of the Susitna River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Matanuska Valley Advisory Committee.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would add two additional fishing days on Unit 2 streams along the Parks Highway every fifth calendar year. Specifically, the streams that would be affected by this change would be Birch, Caswell, Goose, Grey's, Little Willow, Montana, Rabideux, Sheep, Sunshine, and Trapper creeks, and Kashwitna River.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? From January 1 through the third Monday in June and on Saturday, Sunday and Monday for three consecutive weeks starting on the fourth Saturday in June, the Susitna River from its confluence with the Deshka River to its confluence with the Talkeetna River (Unit 2) is open to sport fishing for king salmon 20 inches or greater in length.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would increase the harvest of king salmon by an unknown amount. For some of the eastside tributaries this would likely not be sustainable.

BACKGROUND: The king salmon season was extended by emergency order for several eastside Susitna River streams (Unit 2 and Unit 6 of the Susitna River drainage) for 12 of 14 years beginning in 1990. This prompted the department to submit a proposal to the BOF to extend the season by regulation for one additional three day weekend which went into effect in 2005. Over the past 5 years, Willow Creek fell below lower end of its escapement goal 1 time, Goose Creek, 2 times, and Sheep Creek, 3 times. .

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. Most of the tributaries flowing into the eastside of the Susitna River are already at maximum harvest levels and additional liberalization of regulations could jeopardize the sustainability of future king salmon returns.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 341 - 5 AAC 61.114. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for Unit 2 of the Susitna River Drainage Area.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow the use of treble hooks on the Parks highway streams on May 15, 2 weeks earlier than the current date of June 1.

PROPOSED BY: Matanuska Valley Advisory Committee.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Only unbaited, single hook, artificial lures are allowed from September 1 through June 1.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would increase the harvest of king salmon by some amount. Nearly all the sport fishing effort at this time of the year is directed at fishing for pre-spawning aggregates of rainbow trout, therefore it is likely that the catch and release related mortality for rainbow trout would increase.

BACKGROUND: The regulation that restricted the Parks highway streams (Unit 2) to unbaited, single hook, artificial lures from September 1 through May 31 was adopted by the board during the 1996 meeting. The board adopted this proposal to aid in the release of fish and to reduce the catch and release related mortality that is associated with hooking injuries on rainbow trout. Parks Highway streams are recognized not only for the number of trout they produce but also for producing an abundance of trout over 20 inches. Several of these streams, Montana and Willow creeks and the North Fork of the Kashwitna River, were further recognized for their unique characteristics and were given special status by the board as a special Management Area for Rainbow Trout 5 AAC 61.025.

Very few king salmon are present and/or caught in the Parks Highway streams prior to June 1. However, use of treble hooks would increase harvest of available king salmon. Most of the tributaries flowing into the eastside of the Susitna River are already at or slightly above maximum harvest levels and any additional harvest may jeopardize the sustainability of future king salmon returns to these systems.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. The department supports the use of single hooks to facilitate fish release in fisheries that are primarily catch and release. Large numbers of rainbow trout migrating from overwintering areas on the Susitna River to ascend spawning tributaries in Unit 2 share the same waters with early arriving king salmon during the majority of May. Allowing anglers to use treble hooks 15 days earlier on the Parks Highway streams would do little to increase the harvest of king salmon as very few king salmon are available in Unit 2 at that particular time of the year.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 342 - 5 AAC 61.114. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for Unit 2 of the Susitna River Drainage Area; and 5 AAC 61.120. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for Unit 5 of the Susitna River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Matanuska Valley Advisory Committee.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would increase the coho salmon bag and possession limit for Alaskan residents from 2 fish to 3 fish for the eastside Susitna and Talkeetna River drainages.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The bag and possession limit is 2 coho salmon in the eastside Susitna and Talkeetna River drainages for all anglers.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would increase harvest of coho salmon in 12 sport fisheries including Willow, Little Willow, Sheep, Goose, Greys, Caswell, Montana, Birch, Sunshine, Rabideux, and Clear creeks and the Kashwitna River. Harvest of coho salmon in small clear water sloughs within Units 2 and 5 would be increased as well. The increased harvest may be unsustainable on years of low returns.

BACKGROUND: Poor returns of coho salmon to Upper Cook Inlet in 1997 and 1999, coupled with not meeting escapement goals prompted the Board to reduce the coho salmon sport fisheries on select Knik Arm and Susitna River streams. In 2000, the Board conducted a special out-of–cycle session to address Cook Inlet coho salmon. Because of

the wide decline in coho salmon abundance, restrictive action was taken on a wide geographic range (i.e., Anchorage, Kenai, Susitna River, Knik Arm, and parts of West Cook Inlet). Coho salmon restrictions were placed on both sport and commercial fisheries throughout most of the Upper Cook Inlet area. In the sport fishery, coho salmon limits were reduced from 3 fish per day to 2 fish per day. Possession limits were reduced from 6 to 4 in some areas, while in other cases, such as the eastside Susitna and Talkeetna River, possession limits were equal to the bag limit.

Coho salmon runs to NCI waters have increased beginning in 2000. The Board took action in 2005 to return the daily bag and possession limit to the original 3 per day/6 in possession along westside Susitna River tributaries, excluding Alexander Creek. Westside tributaries support relatively large runs of coho salmon on good return years with relatively low associated harvest and use. Consequently the sustainability of coho salmon as a result of low returns to westside Susitna tributaries is less threatened by harvest than on eastside Susitna tributaries. Eastside Susitna and Talkeetna River tributaries, which are road accessible and receive high angler use, may not be able to sustain an increase in harvest during years with low or average returns.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **OPPOSED** to the biological aspects of this proposal and is **NEUTRAL** on the allocative aspects which would set different bag limits based upon residency. Increasing the coho bag limit in streams that are road-accessible, within close proximity to major population centers, and which receive relatively high angler use, may increase the harvest above a sustainable level on years with low returns.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 343 - 5 AAC 61.120 (1). Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession and size limits, and methods and means for Unit 5 of the Susitna River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Wayne Coggins

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow the use of bait in the Talkeetna River an additional two weeks until September 15.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? From September 1 through July 13, in all flowing waters only unbaited, artificial lures may be used.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would likely increase the harvest of coho salmon by some amount. Harvest and incidental catch and release related mortality would increase on rainbow trout, Dolly Varden and arctic grayling.

BACKGROUND: The Susitna River which includes the Talkeetna River contains the majority of wild rainbow trout waters in the NCI management area. In the late 1980's Susitna drainage rainbow trout stocks began to show signs of decline. The Board began to take restrictive action though the next several Upper Cook Inlet board meetings in an attempt to restore the Susitna River rainbow trout population to historical levels.

In 1987, all drainages of the Susitna River from its junction with the Talkeetna River upstream to Devil's Canyon were designated trophy rainbow trout waters. In 1989 catch and release regulations were initiated in a portion of the Lake Creek drainage, the Deshka River upstream of the forks and the Fish Creek drainage (Clear Creek/Talkeetna River drainage). In 1993 the North Fork of the Kashwitna River was designated catch and release, and in 1997 Prairie, Alexander, Willow and Montana creeks were designated catch and release. In 1999 Canyon Creek (Skwentna River) was designated catch and release.

Area-wide regulations prohibiting the use of bait in flowing waters September 1 through December 31 were adopted in 1987 to provide protection to rainbow trout. This was amended in 1993 to include the period of January 1 to May 15. In 1995 all flowing waters of the Susitna River drainage were limited to unbaited, artificial lures from September 1 through July 13. In 1999 retention of rainbow trout in all flowing waters of the Susitna River drainage was prohibited from April 15 through June 14 to protect spawning fish.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. In early September rainbow trout begin to migrate from the clearwater drainages and concentrate in the mainstem Talkeetna River, a bait fishery during that time of the year could have serious consequences to pre-wintering aggregates of rainbow trout in this area.

COST ANALYSIS: The Department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

WEST COOK INLET SALMON SPORT FISHERIES

PROPOSAL 344 - AAC 62.122 (5). Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession and size limits, and methods and means for the West Cook Inlet Area.

PROPOSED BY: Terry Jorgensen

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would close the portion of Chuitna River upstream of the old cable crossing to all fishing.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? In the Chuitna River drainage upstream of the cable crossing, king salmon may not be retained or possessed; king

salmon caught must be released immediately. Upstream of the cable crossing is open to harvest for other salmon and resident fish populations.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THIS PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would reduce the area open to fishing for salmon other than king salmon and resident species. Harvest levels would decrease by some amount because nearly all of the resident fish populations on the Chuitna River are released and few coho salmon are harvested above the cable crossing.

BACKGROUND: Access to Chuitna River is limited to fly-in-only with the exception of the people that reside in the Beluga area. Most of the fishing on this system already occurs (>90%) in the area below the cable crossing which would remain open to fishing. The Chuitna River receives approximately 2,475 angler days of sport fishing effort annually of which more than 90% is directed at fishing for king salmon. Sport harvests and catch of king salmon from the Chuitna River average about 550 and 1800 fish respectively. Sport harvest for other salmon and resident fish species is fairly low. Escapements of king salmon into the Chuitna River have been well within the escapement goal range of 1,200 – 1,900 fish in twelve of the past thirteen years. Comparable catch information from the department's statewide harvest survey indicate that other fish populations are healthy.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. Currently there are no biological concerns or problems with other salmon and resident fish populations for this system, therefore it is unnecessary to take restrictive action at this time.

COST ANALYSIS: The Department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

KNIK ARM SALMON SPORT FISHERIES

PROPOSAL 345 -5 AAC 60.170. Little Susitna River Coho Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Tom Olsen

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would eliminate the use of bait when sport fishing on the Little Susitna River.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? In the Little Susitna River only unbaited artificial lures may be used from July 14th through August 5th. A person, after taking a bag limit of salmon from the Little Susitna River downstream of river mile 32.5, may not sport fish that same day for any species of fish in water open to sport fishing for salmon. However an angler may continue to catch and release as long as they have not retained a bag limit.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would reduce harvest and catch and release related mortality of coho salmon by an unknown amount.

BACKGROUND: In 1993 the department conducted a coho salmon hook and release mortality study in the lower reaches of the Littler Susitna River. This study was prompted by anglers concerns over dead or dying coho salmon observed in the lower river. Results from this study showed a much higher mortality rate (69%) than initially thought for coho salmon that were released by sport fishers in the lower river. Under the current regulation, downstream of river mile 32.5, you must quit fishing once you have harvested your limit of salmon. However an angler may continue to catch and release as long as they have not retained a bag limit. This regulation was adopted by the board in 2000 to reduce the catch and release related mortality of coho salmon in the lower river.

The department operates a weir on the Little Susitna River to count coho salmon. This weir is located at river Mile (RM) 70 and is approximately one mile upstream of the Parks Highway Bridge. Escapements of coho salmon counted past the weir have been well within and above the department's escapement goal range of 10,100 to 17,700 for nine of the past 10 years. The average annual harvest of coho salmon from the Little Susitna River is about 15,000 fish, with an additional 8,000 fish being released. If half of the coho salmon that are released end up as mortalities as many as 2,000 - 4,000 additional coho salmon may not survive to spawn. On years where coho salmon returns are low this mortality could be significant in terms of achieving the escapement goal, however that has not been the case in the past decade.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. There is currently no biological reason to reduce the sport harvest of coho salmon on the Little Susitna River.

COST ANALYSIS: The Department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 346 - 5 AAC 60.122 Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession and size limits, and methods and means for the Knik Arm Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Matanuska Valley Advisory Committee.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow the use of bait when sport fishing for king salmon on the Little Susitna River from July 1 through July 13.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? In the Little Susitna River only unbaited artificial lures may be used from July 14th through August 5th.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would increase harvest of king salmon by some unknown, but likely unsustainable, amount.

BACKGROUND: In response to king salmon runs falling below escapement goals in the Northern Cook Inlet beginning in the early 1990's action was taken by emergency orders and regulatory changes to reduce harvest levels. Prior to the 1995 season, the department issued emergency orders for the Little Susitna River which prohibited bait during the king salmon season, reduced the bag and possession limit to one king salmon and allowed fishing only between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m.

The Little Susitna River is a glacial fed steam in which during some years it is impossible to do an escapement survey due to poor visibility. During the past twenty years there have been five years when conditions didn't allow escapement counts. These counts are the only means the department has of evaluating the return of king salmon besides angler reports of fishing success. During the previous five years 2003-2007, the harvest of king salmon has been between 2,100 and 3,300 fish with an average escapement count of approximately 1,400 fish. This indicates an exploitation rate of approximately 60-70%. The exploitation rate is probably higher due to catch and release related mortality. The average number of king salmon caught and released on this system are approximately 5,500. The overall escapement of king salmon into the Little Susitna River has been at about the mid point of the escapement goal range (9,100 – 18,600); any liberalization of regulations on this system may jeopardize the sustainability of this run.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. The Little Susitna River is already at maximum harvest levels and any addition harvest may jeopardize the sustainability of future king salmon returns to this system.

COST ANALYSIS: The Department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 347 - AAC 60.122 (9). General provisions for seasons, bag, possession and size limits, and methods and means for the Knik Arm Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Matthew Conley

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would restrict the use of motor boats on the Little Susitna River from the Parks Highway Bridge at Houston to the Burma Road Access site, at the Little Susitna Public Use Facility (LSPUF).

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? There are no power boat restrictions on the Little Susitna.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would decrease the harvest, catch, and fishing effort of salmon by a significant amount.

BACKGROUND: The Little Susitna River is a fairly small windy river system located within the Matanuska Susitna Valley. There are two major locations for boat access to the Little Susitna River, one is located immediately downstream of the Parks Highway Bridge and the other is a department owned site located 40 miles downstream of the Parks Highway bridge. Every year this river system receives about 35,000 angler days of effort. The majority of this effort is expended by anglers using power boats. Power boats on the river range in size from 10 to 30 feet utilizing both outboard and inboard engines which range in horse power from 2 - 250 hp for outboard motors, with inboard engines as large as 454 cubic inches. Because this is such a small windy river, with a high volume of boat traffic, there are several boating accidents each year. Although no fatalities have been recorded as of yet, many serious accidents requiring hospitalization have taken place.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. Eliminating the use of outboard motors on the Little Susitna River is a social issue that does not affect the sustainability of salmon stocks. Although this proposal is seeking to ban outboard motors for all user groups, it may be difficult for the board to demonstrate the reasonable necessity of the measure for conservation or development purposes.

COST ANALYSIS: The Department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 348 - 5 AAC 60.122. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for Knik Arm Drainages Area.

PROPOSED BY: Andy Couch.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would increase the amount of area open to king salmon fishing at the Eklutna Tailrace, a terminal fishery. The boundaries would be extended to include all waters of the Knik River from the Knik Arm to ½ mile above the Tailrace, waters of the Tailrace, and all waters within ½ mile radius of the Knik River.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Eklutna Tailrace is open to fishing for king salmon from its confluence with the Knik River upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 100 feet downstream of the Old Glenn Highway, and in the waters within a one-half mile radius of its confluence with the Knik River.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would likely increase the harvest of hatchery fish as well as non-target wild king salmon

stocks migrating upstream of the Tailrace in the Knik River and in the Matanuska River. Angler participation would likely increase while at the same time decreasing the congestion that is now beginning to occur at that site

BACKGROUND: The Knik River is a glacial river. The Knik and Matanuska Rivers intersect at Knik Arm forming a web of interconnected channels. The two rivers do not fully separate from one another for the first 4 miles above Knik Arm. The Eklutna Tailrace flows into the Knik River and is a result of the Eklutna Power Plant. The Tailrace is approximately 1/4 mile long and empties into a side channel of the Knik River at river mile (rm) 4. A non-profit hatchery was operated at this site from 1981 to 1998, however this hatchery is not longer in operation. The department began a terminal king salmon fishery at this site, stocking the first smolt in 2002. One of the main objectives of this program was to take pressure off wild king salmon stocks through supplemental hatchery fish returning to a terminal harvest area. Therefore, the harvest area was chosen to maximize the potential for harvest of stocked hatchery fish only. Three annual objectives are to 1) stock the Tailrace with 200,000 king salmon smolt, 2) produce a run of 4,000 fish, and 3) result in an expenditure of 10,000 angler days. This is a relatively new fishery, having only received its first compliment of all age classes in 2006. Harvest in 2006 was 484 king salmon.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** increasing the area open to fishing at the Eklutna Tailrace by an addition of 1.5 miles but **OPPOSES** extending the fishery downstream to the confluence with Knik Arm because small fragile stocks of king salmon ascending the Matanuska River could be subject to over harvest.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

NORTHERN COOK INLET RESIDENT SPECIES

PROPOSAL 349 - 5 AAC 60.122. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession and size limits, and methods and means for the Knik Arm Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Thomas Knowles

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow sport anglers fishing Big Lake to use bait on a year-round basis.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Only one single hook, artificial lures are allowed from November 1 through April 30. Bait is not allowed during the winter fishery.

WHAT WOULD BE THE AFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would increase angler participation, harvest and catch related mortality of rainbow trout, arctic char and burbot in Big Lake, perhaps to levels that would no longer be sustainable.

BACKGROUND: Big Lake is the most popular sport fishing lake in the Northern Cook Inlet Management Area (NCIMA). On average, anglers expend more than 10, 000 angler days of effort to harvest 389, 3,277 and 195, rainbow trout, arctic char and burbot, respectively. Big Lake is unique in that it supports the only natural arctic char population in the NCIMA. Big Lake is also one of the few lakes in the area that provides a viable burbot fishery. The next closest lake that supports a productive burbot fishery is more than one hundred miles away. Because of Big Lake's unique fishing opportunities, size, and geographic location adjacent to or in close proximity of major population centers, this lake has become extremely popular with area fishermen. In 1998, in response to declining harvest and catch trend information and local angler concerns about fewer available rainbow trout, arctic char and burbot, the department submitted proposals to the board to restrict harvest opportunities on Big Lake. Since much of the fishing on Big Lake took place during the ice covered months, the board supported a winter bait restriction. Although the bait restriction did very little to reduce angler effort on Big Lake, harvest and catch of resident fish populations were reduced dramatically. Currently, sport fish harvest levels for rainbow trout and arctic char appear to be sustainable.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. Given that the Mat-Su Valley is the fastest growing area in the state, it is likely that angler effort on area lakes will increase and that any liberalization of regulations, especially on systems that have a history of overexploitation, could drive resident fish populations below sustainable levels.

COST ANALYSIS: The Department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 350 - 5 AAC 60.122. Special Provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession and size limits, and methods and means for the Knik Arm Drainage Area.

PROPOSED By: Steve Runyan

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would close Big Lake to sport fishing for burbot during a portion of the spawning season from March 15 through May 1 and reduce the bag and possession limit from 5 fish to 2 fish.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? There is no closed sport fish season for burbot in Big Lake. The bag and possession limit for burbot in Big Lake is 5 fish.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would reduce the sport harvest of Big Lake burbot while possibly increasing the abundance of burbot.

BACKGROUND: Big Lake is the most popular sport fishing lake in the Northern Cook Inlet Management Area (NCIMA). On average, anglers expend more than 10,000 angler days of effort to harvest 389, 3,277 and 195, rainbow trout, arctic char and burbot respectively. Very few lakes within the Matanuska Susitna Valley support burbot populations; consequently, Big Lake receives a substantial amount of sport fishing pressure. Other lakes that support productive burbot fisheries are more than one hundred miles away. Because of Big Lake's unique fishing opportunities, size, and geographic location adjacent to or in close proximity of major population centers it is extremely popular with area fishermen.

Although catch information for Big Lake burbot is somewhat unreliable it is assumed that most anglers retain burbot once they are caught. A burbot study by the department conducted in 1991 indicated that the population of burbot greater than 18 inches in length for Big Lakes was only about 650 fish. Even if the population of burbot has doubled since the 1991 study, recent harvest information suggests that about 15% of the catchable sized burbot are being harvested from Big Lake each year and in some years, harvests levels may exceed as much as 50% of the assumed population. Department studies, conducted primarily in the upper Susitna area, indicate that in order to manage burbot populations to achieve sustainable yield only about 10% of the production is surplus. The harvest of Big Lake burbot fluctuates drastically from year to year with a high of 765 to a harvest of 0, with an overall average harvest of about 195 burbot per year since 1977. The most recent five year average (2001-2005) harvest is 426; a level much higher than the recommended harvest levels for maintaining a sustainable burbot population.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** this proposal. It is highly likely that Big Lake burbot populations are being overexploited at the current rate of harvest.

COST ANALYSIS: The Department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 351 - 5 AAC 60.122(5)(F) Special Provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession and size limits, and methods and means for the Knik Arm Drainage Area.

PROPOSED By: Steve Runyan

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would reduce the bag and possession limit for burbot in Big Lake from 5 fish, to 2 fish.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The bag and possession limit for burbot in Big Lake is 5 fish.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would reduce the sport harvest of Big Lake burbot while possibly increasing the abundance of burbot.

BACKGROUND: Big Lake is the most popular sport fishing lake in the Northern Cook Inlet Management Area (NCIMA). On average, anglers expend more than 10,000 angler days of effort to harvest 389, 3,277 and 195, rainbow trout, arctic char and burbot respectively. Very few lakes within the Matanuska Susitna Valley support burbot populations so consequently, Big Lake receives a substantial amount of sport fishing pressure. Other lakes that support productive burbot fisheries are more than one hundred miles away. Because of Big Lake's unique fishing opportunities, size, and geographic location adjacent to or in close proximity of major population centers it is extremely popular with area fishermen.

Although catch information for Big Lake burbot is somewhat unreliable it is assumed that most anglers retain burbot once they are caught. A burbot study by the department conducted in 1991 indicated that the population of burbot greater than 18 inches in length for Big Lakes was only about 650 fish. Even if the population of burbot has doubled since the 1991 study, recent harvest information suggests that about 15% of the catchable sized burbot are being harvested from Big Lake each year and in some years, harvests levels may exceed as many as 50% of the assumed population. Department studies, conducted primarily in the upper Susitna area, indicate that in order to manage burbot populations to achieve sustainable yield only about 10% of the production is surplus. The harvest of Big Lake burbot fluctuates drastically from year to year with a high of 765 to a harvest of 0, with an overall average harvest of about 195 burbot per year since 1977. The most recent five year average (2001-2005) harvest is 426, a level much higher than the recommended harvest levels for maintaining a sustainable burbot population.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** this proposal. It is highly likely that Big Lake Burbot populations are being overexploited at the current rate of harvest.

COST ANALYSIS: The Department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 352 - 5 ACC 60.122 (10)(B). Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Knik Arm drainages area; 5 AAC 61.118 (10). Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for Unit 4 of the Susitna River Drainage Area; and 5 ACC 62.122 (13)(C). Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the West Cook Inlet Area.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would add four unstocked lakes (Shell, Onestone, Nancy, and Chuitbuna Lakes) and five stocked lakes (Anderson, Memory, Prator, Crystal, and Long Lakes) to the list of lakes currently managed for liberal northern pike harvest.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Area-wide, northern pike may be taken year round with rod and reel, spear, and bow and arrow. There is no bag, possession or size limits, with exception to Alexander Lake. Two (2) hooks per line may be used while fishing through the ice provided both hooks are attached to the same single piece of bait. Generally, standard ice fishing gear allows for the use of 2 lines per angler. Use of 5 lines per angler is allowed on select lakes in the Northern Cook Inlet Area, including Figure Eight, Sucker, Flathorn, Lower Vern, Upper Vern, Lockwood, Whiskey, Hewitt, Donkey, Threemile/Tukhallah, Trapper, Trail, Neil, and Kroto lakes, No Name/Cabin Lake, and lakes of the Nancy Lake Recreation Area (except Nancy Lake).

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would increase the harvest of northern pike in select wild and stocked lakes where native and stocked fish species have been identified as impacted by pike predation.

BACKGROUND: Northern pike are not indigenous to the NCI management area. Having been illegally introduced during the 1950s, their proliferation and subsequent impact on area fish stocks was not measurably noticeable until about the mid 1980's when harvest rate began to increase. Over the past 25 years harvest of northern pike has increased from just over 100 fish in 1981 to nearly 12,023 pike in 2001. Growth in the fishery during the mid 1980s to mid 1990s indicated a period of rapid range expansion by pike throughout the westside Susitna area waters. In response, the department began gathering baseline data to describe population structure and to determine impact on salmonid productivity in the area during the mid 1990s.

Recommendations stemming from this research prompted the Board in 1996 to liberalize northern pike regulations with the bag and possession limit increased from 10 fish to no bag limit. Additional action taken provided for the use of 5 lines through the ice in select NCI lakes where northern pike were prolific. The average harvest and catch of northern pike in NCI from 1992 to 1996 was approximately 5,300 and 22,000 fish, respectively. The new regulations provided for an increased harvest and catch in 1997 of approximately 9,000 and 26,300 fish, respectively. Prior to 1996, before liberalizations were in effect, about 24% of the catch was harvested. After 1996 and to present day, about 30% of the catch is harvested.

During the 2002 BOF meeting 7 additional lakes were added to the list of lakes selected for maximal harvest (Fishing through the ice using 5 lines). Currently all lakes designated for use of 5 lines contains nearly only pike. The use of 5 lines over the past 10 years on select lakes has demonstrated increased harvest, but not obvious widespread stunting of northern pike. Research has shown that large pike (>30 inches) can serve as a

control mechanism for decreasing small pike abundance through cannibalism. Managers would like to continue this pattern of harvest without instituting slot limits, which can result in lost angler interest and overall lower harvest rates.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department submitted and **SUPPORTS** this proposal. The department would like to omit Nancy Lake form this proposal, as burbot stocks in this lake have declined to unsustainable levels and sport harvest is not allowed. Liberalizing pike regulation on Nancy Lake would increase hook and release related mortality on Nancy Lake burbot stocks.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 353 - 5 AAC 61.118. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for Unit 4 of the Susitna River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Brendon Sutherland

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would add Shell Lake to the list of waters managed for liberal harvest of northern pike.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Area-wide, northern pike may be taken year round with rod and reel, spear, and bow and arrow. There is no bag, possession or size limits, with exception to Alexander Lake. Two (2) hooks per line may be used while fishing through the ice provided both hooks are attached to the same single piece of bait. Generally, standard ice fishing gear allows for the use of 2 lines per angler. Use of 5 lines per angler is allowed on select lakes in the Northern Cook Inlet area, including Figure Eight, Sucker, Flathorn, Lower Vern, Upper Vern, Lockwood, Whiskey, Hewitt, Donkey, Threemile/Tukhallah, Trapper, Trail, Neil, and Kroto lakes, No Name/Cabin Lake, and lakes of the Nancy Lake Recreation Area (except Nancy Lake).

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would increase the harvest of northern pike in Shell Lake where native fish species have been identified as impacted by pike predation.

BACKGROUND: Northern pike are not indigenous to the NCI management area. Having been illegally introduced during the 1950s, their proliferation and subsequent impact on area fish stocks was not measurably noticeable until about the mid 1980's when harvest rate began to increase. Over the past 25 years harvest of northern pike has increased from just over 100 fish in 1981 to nearly 12,023 pike in 2001. Growth in the fishery during the mid 1980s to mid 1990s indicated a period of rapid range expansion throughout the westside Susitna area waters. In response, the department began gathering baseline data to describe population structure and to determine impact on salmonid productivity in the area during the mid 1990s.

Recommendations stemming from this research prompted the board in 1996 liberalize northern pike regulations with the bag and possession limit increased from 10 fish to no bag limit. Additional action taken provided for the use of 5 lines through the ice in select NCI lakes where northern pike were prolific. The average harvest and catch of northern pike in NCI from 1992 to 1996 was approximately 5,300 and 22,000 fish, respectively. The new regulations provided for an increased harvest and catch in 1997 of approximately 9,000 and 26,300 fish, respectively. Prior to 1996, before liberalizations were in effect, about 24% of the catch was harvested. After 1996 and to present day, about 30% of the catch is harvested.

During the 2002 BOF meeting 7 additional lakes were added to the list of lakes selected for maximal harvest (Fishing through the ice using 5 lines). Currently all lakes designated for use of 5 lines contains nearly only pike. The use of 5 lines over the past 10 years on select lakes has demonstrated increased harvest, but not obvious widespread stunting of northern pike. Research has shown that large pike (>30 inches) can serve as a control mechanism for decreasing small pike abundance through cannibalism. Managers would like to continue this pattern of harvest without instituting slot limits, which can result in lost angler interest and overall lower harvest rates.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** this proposal. The department proposal 352 also includes adding Shell Lake to the list of lakes where 5 lines are allowed.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 354 - 5 AAC 60.120 General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Knik Arm Drainages Area and 5 ACC 61.120. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for Unit 5 of the Susitna River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Daniel Franckowiak.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow 7 to 12 lines while fishing for northern pike in all Northern Cook Inlet (NCI) waters except those with pike harvest limitations or bait restrictions.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Area-wide, northern pike may be taken year round with rod and reel, spear, and bow and arrow. There is no bag, possession or size limits, with exception to Alexander Lake. Two (2) hooks per line may be used while fishing through the ice provided both hooks are attached to the same single piece of bait. Generally, standard ice fishing gear allows for the use of 2 lines per angler. Use of 5 lines per angler is allowed on select lakes in the Northern Cook Inlet area, including Figure Eight, Sucker, Flathorn, Lower Vern, Upper Vern, Lockwood, Whiskey,

Hewitt, Donkey, Threemile/Tukhallah, Trapper, Trail, Neil, and Kroto lakes, No Name/Cabin Lake, and lakes of the Nancy Lake Recreation Area (except Nancy Lake).

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would increase opportunity and the harvest of northern pike in all waters of NCI except where pike harvest limitations or bait restrictions are presently in effect.

BACKGROUND: Northern pike are not indigenous to the NCI management area. Having been illegally introduced during the 1950s, their proliferation and subsequent impact on area fish stocks was not measurably noticeable until about the mid 1980's when harvest rate began to increase. Over the past 25 years harvest of northern pike has increased from just over 100 fish in 1981 to nearly 12,023 pike in 2001. Growth in the fishery during the mid 1980s to mid 1990s indicated a period of rapid range expansion throughout the westside Susitna area waters. In response, the department began gathering baseline data to describe population structure and to determine impact on salmonid productivity in the area during the mid 1990s.

Recommendations stemming from this research prompted the board in 1996 liberalize northern pike regulations with the bag and possession limit increased from 10 fish to no bag limit. Additional action taken provided for the use of 5 lines through the ice in select NCI lakes where northern pike were prolific. The average harvest and catch of northern pike in NCI from 1992 to 1996 was approximately 5,300 and 22,000 fish, respectively. The new regulations provided for an increased harvest and catch in 1997 of approximately 9,000 and 26,300 fish, respectively. Prior to 1996, before liberalizations were in effect, about 24% of the catch was harvested. After 1996 and to present day, about 30% of the catch is harvested.

During the 2002 BOF meeting 7 additional lakes were added to the list of lakes selected for maximal harvest (Fishing through the ice using 5 lines). Currently all lakes designated for use of 5 lines contains nearly only pike. The use of 5 lines over the past 10 years on select lakes has demonstrated increased harvest, but not obvious widespread stunting of northern pike. Research has shown that large pike (>30 inches) can serve as a control mechanism for decreasing small pike abundance through cannibalism. Managers would like to continue this pattern of harvest without instituting slot limits, which can result in lost angler interest and overall lower harvest rates.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal as written. The department recommends 5 lines instead of 7 to 12 lines for consistency with current burbot regulations. The department is in support of northern pike management strategies that will reduce northern pike abundance in waters where northern pike continue to prey upon native and stocked fish populations. However, the department is cautious about impact on nontarget wild fish species. For this reason, the department would support liberalizing the number of lines fished in select flowing waters where nearly only pike exist, such as Fish Creek (lower Susitna River), Fish Creek (Kroto Slough), Whitsoe Creek, and Indian Creek (Yentna River), but not in other flowing waters such as Deshka River sloughs where overwintering rainbow trout may be present.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 355 - 5 ACC 61.120. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for Unit 5 of the Susitna River Drainage Area.

PROPOSED BY: Bruce E. Taylor

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow five lines with baited hooks while fishing for northern pike after freeze up (November 1 – April 15) in all sloughs, ponds, and tributaries, and excluding main channels, that drain into the Deshka, Yentna, and Susitna Rivers.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Area-wide, northern pike may be taken year round with rod and reel, spear, and bow and arrow. There is no bag, possession or size limits, with exception to Alexander Lake. Two (2) hooks per line may be used while fishing through the ice provided both hooks are attached to the same single piece of bait. Generally, standard ice fishing gear allows for the use of 2 lines per angler. Use of 5 lines per angler is allowed on select lakes in the NCI area, including Figure Eight, Sucker, Flathorn, Lower Vern, Upper Vern, Lockwood, Whiskey, Hewitt, Donkey, Threemile/Tukhallah, Trapper, Trail, Neil, and Kroto lakes, No Name/Cabin Lake, and lakes of the Nancy Lake Recreation Area (except Nancy Lake).

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would likely increase harvest of northern pike in sloughs, ponds, and tributaries of the Deshka, Yentna, and Susitna Rivers by an unknown amount.

BACKGROUND: Northern pike are not indigenous to the NCI management area. Having been illegally introduced during the 1950s, their proliferation and subsequent impact on area fish stocks was not measurably noticeable until about the mid 1980's when harvest rate began to increase. Over the past 25 years harvest of northern pike has increased from just over 100 fish in 1981 to nearly 12,023 pike in 2001. Growth in the fishery during the mid 1980s to mid 1990s indicated a period of rapid range expansion throughout the westside Susitna area waters. In response, the department began gathering baseline data to describe population structure and to determine impact on salmonid productivity in the area during the mid 1990s.

Recommendations stemming from this research prompted the board in 1996 liberalize northern pike regulations with the bag and possession limit increased from 10 fish to no bag limit. Additional action taken provided for the use of 5 lines through the ice in select NCI lakes where northern pike were prolific. The average harvest and catch of northern pike in NCI from 1992 to 1996 was approximately 5,300 and 22,000 fish, respectively. The new regulations provided for an increased harvest and catch in 1997 of approximately 9,000 and 26,300 fish, respectively. Prior to 1996, before liberalizations

were in effect, about 24% of the catch was harvested. After 1996 and to present day, about 30% of the catch is harvested.

During the 2002 BOF meeting 7 additional lakes were added to the list of lakes selected for maximal harvest (Fishing through the ice using 5 lines). Currently all lakes designated for use of 5 lines contains nearly only pike. The use of 5 lines over the past 10 years on select lakes has demonstrated increased harvest, but not obvious widespread stunting of northern pike. Research has shown that large pike (>30 inches) can serve as a control mechanism for decreasing small pike abundance through cannibalism. Managers would like to continue this pattern of harvest without instituting slot limits, which can result in lost angler interest and overall lower harvest rates.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal as written. The department is in support of northern pike management strategies that will reduce northern pike abundance in waters where northern pike continue to prey upon native fish populations. However, the department is cautious about impact on nontarget wild fish species. For this reason, the department would support liberalizing the number of lines fished in select flowing waters where nearly only pike exist, such as Fish Creek (lower Susitna River), Fish Creek (Kroto Slough), Whitsoe Creek, and Indian Creek (Yentna River), but not in other waters of the Susitna Drainage such as Deshka River sloughs where overwintering rainbow trout may be present.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

NORTHERN COOK INLET PERSONAL USE

PROPOSAL 356 - 5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon fishery Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Tom Obrien

WHAT WOULD THESE PROPOSALS DO? This proposal would establish a personal use dipnet fishery in selected Upper Cook Inlet drainages such as; Ship, Bird, Campbell and Jim creeks and the Little Susitna River (all species of salmon could be retained), and would lower the trigger point for opening the sockeye salmon personal use fishery on Fish Creek from 70,00 to 50,000 sockeye salmon.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The only personal use dipnet fishery for salmon in the Northern and Western Cook Inlet area is on Fish Creek (Big Lake drainage). This fishery is a dipnet fishery for sockeye salmon only and opens by emergency between July 10 through July 31 if the department projects that the escapement of sockeye salmon into Fish Creek will exceed the escapement goal of 20,000 -70,000 fish.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? Salmon stocks in Northern Cook Inlet are fully allocated. This proposal would reduce allocation of salmon stocks between current users in Northern and Western Cook Inlet areas by allocating fish to a new user group (personal use). In cases of smaller systems such as; Ship, Campbell, Fish, Jim and the Little Susitna River a personal use fishery would likely reduce salmon populations to unsustainable levels.

BACKGROUND: Currently the only personal use fishery in Northern and Western Cook Inlet for salmon is on Fish Creek. Fish Creek has been stocked annually with sockeye salmon fry since 1976. The department initiated the stocking program in 1976 and Cook Inlet Aquaculture took over the stocking operations in 1993. The personal use dip net fishery was established in 1987 and is governed by 5 AAC 77.540, the Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Management Plan. This fishery is prosecuted to harvest surplus sockeye salmon in excess of the escapement goal. This fishery targets both Fish Creek wild and hatchery sockeye salmon stocks. The Fish Creek personal use fishery has been open early only once during the past eight years due to low returns of sockeye salmon to the Fish Creek drainage.

Ship, Bird, Campbell, Jim, and Cottonwood creeks, and the Little Susitna, and many small streams in the Beluga area have fairly small salmon populations and likely could not support a personal use fishery. Salmon returning to the waters identified in this proposal are all currently fully allocated.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **OPPOSED** to the biological aspects of this proposal because it would likely result in unsustainable harvests and is **NEUTRAL** on the allocative aspects.

COST ANALYSIS: The Department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 357 - 5 AAC 77.527 Personal Use Smelt Fishery.

PROPOSED BY: Tom Obrien

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would establish a bag and possession of hooligan in the Cook Inlet personal use smelt use fisheries of 7.5 gallons.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The personal use hooligan (smelt) fishery in Cook Inlet opens on April 1. It closes in saltwater on May 31 and in fresh water on June 15. Personal use fisheries are only open to Alaska residents holding a current sport fishing license, an ADF&G Permanent Identification Card (PID), or an Alaska resident disabled veterans lifetime hunting and fishing license (DAV). There is no bag or possession limit for hooligan.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal may lower the harvest of hooligan by some unknown amount.

BACKGROUND: Hooligan are harvested each spring from several Cook Inlet streams and nearby saltwater areas, but most notably from the Kenai River, Susitna River, and Twentymile River. In 2007 a commercial hooligan fishery at the mouth of the Susitna River in Upper Cook Inlet harvested 67 tons of a 100 ton quota. The harvest from the personal use hooligan fisheries in Upper Cook Inlet streams fluctuates dramatically from year to year. The Kenai River hooligan harvest averaged about 16,000 fish annually for the last ten years (1996-2005), but fluctuated from 41,085 to 9,206 hooligan. In the Susitna River drainage the 10 year average (1996-2005) harvest is 8,212 fish, but fluctuated from 27,031 to 5,492 hooligan. The Turnagain Arm personal use fishery, located at or near the Twentymile River, ranged from 76,800 fish in 2002 to 8,800 fish in 2005, with an average harvest of about 32,000 fish.

Fluctuations in total harvest are likely due to the hooligan life history strategy that does not show the same site fidelity to natal streams as salmon, and has natural population spikes. Commercial, and or subsistence harvests of hooligan in other areas are also highly cyclic. Biomass estimates of the hooligan populations and average daily harvest by angler in Upper Cook Inlet are not known.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. There is no indication of over-harvest of upper Cook Inlet hooligan stocks. The harvests recorded in the past ten years from these systems are not significant in comparison to probable population size.

COST ANALYSIS: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in the fishery.

PROPOSAL 358 - 5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon fishery Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Duane Gluth

WHAT WOULD THESE PROPOSALS DO? This proposal would establish a personal use gillnet salmon fishery in the Beluga area of West Cook Inlet (WCI).

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The only personal use dipnet fishery for salmon in the Northern and Western Cook Inlet area is on Fish Creek (Big Lake drainage). This fishery is a dipnet fishery for sockeye salmon only and opens by emergency between July 10 through July 31 if the department projects that the escapement of sockeye salmon into Fish Creek will exceed the escapement goal range of 20,000 -70,000 fish.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED? This proposal would reduce allocation of salmon stock between users in the Beluga Area of Western Cook Inlet and increase the harvest of targeted salmon species.

BACKGROUND: Currently the only personal use fishery in Northern and Western Cook Inlet for salmon is on Fish Creek. Fish Creek has been stocked annually with sockeye salmon fry since 1976. The department initiated the stocking program in 1976 and Cook Inlet Aquaculture took over the stocking operations in 1993. The personal use dip net fishery was established in 1987 and is governed by 5 AAC 77.540, the Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Management Plan. This fishery is prosecuted to harvest surplus sockeye salmon in excess of the escapement goal. This fishery targets both Fish Creek wild and hatchery sockeye salmon stocks. The Fish Creek personal use fishery has been open early only once during the past eight years due to low returns of sockeye salmon to the Fish Creek drainage.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** the biological aspects of this proposal because many small streams in the Beluga area have fairly small salmon populations and likely could not support a personal use fishery and is **NEUTRAL** on the allocative aspects. The Beluga Area of West Cook Inlet includes several small stream with small salmon populations, all systems within this area are viewed as being fully allocated between subsistence, sport fish, educational and commercial users.

COST ANALYSIS: The Department does not believe that approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.