

Proposal 39

Mr. Chairman and Board Members:

My name is Jack Foster Jr, author of proposal 39, I have 46 years in the drift, seine and set net fishery .

Local set net and seine fishermen have been denied access to harvesting salmon in July August and September these past several years as a result of low numbers of west bound returning chum and pink salmon in the Stepovak Area. While SEDM set net fishermen are shut down, Chignik Fishermen are allowed to fish for pinks and chum salmon in the Perryville and Western Districts of the Chignik area. At times, Chignik fishermen can fish up to 7 days a week catching high numbers of Pink and Chum Salmon destined for the Stepovak area while the local SEDM set net fishermen are shut down and salmon are not returning to the local streams. This is just one of the many instances where SEDM set net fishermen have been discriminated against.

Three changes need to take place.

- 1. When fish stocks of pink and chum salmon have low escapement within the Stepovak Area of the SEDM during July, August the Perryville District and the Western District of the Chignik Management area are closed until there are**

significant returns of salmon in the streams and local SEDM set net fishermen are able to fish.

2. In July and August in the Perryville and Western Districts there shall be at least one 48 hour closed period within a seven day period in order to maintain healthy stocks of salmon in the SEDM.
3. The department will manage the Chignik fishery of the Perryville and Western Districts of the fishery based on the abundance of pink, chum and Coho salmon stocks into the Stepovak area of the SEDM.

It has been my experience, that when both SEDM fishermen and Chignik fished Kuprenoff, the runs in Stepovak were significantly affected due to the practice of overfishing of local Pink and Chum salmon. And guess what? We were all fishing west bound salmon.

Simply put, my proposal is requesting for equal protection under the Alaska Board of Fisheries Findings on Policy for Mixed Stock Salmon Fisheries. These findings indicate:

“The policy should provide that all users of salmon resources should share in actions taken to conserve the resource in a manner which is, ideally, fair and proportional to respective

harvest of the stock in question...to develop management plans as the mechanism to express how the burden of conservation is to be distributed among users and that these management plans also state allocation objectives as determined by application of the allocation criteria...the policy should recognize that salmon resources are generally fully utilized and that stability is an important aspect of the fisheries."

Under the current management practice, the SEDM set netters have been shouldered with the entire burden of conservation for the Pink and Chum fisheries in the SEDM area. SEDM set netters carry the burden of conservation in SEDM area while Chignik salmon runs have been historically high. The catches in SEDM have not reflected a large impact on their runs. The current practices do not reflect the policy. This is a travesty that needs fixing because the SEDM has been targeting all species for just as long as Chignik has been commercially fishing.

While Chignik has been realizing extraordinarily large runs, SEDM set net fishermen have just been making a living due to extremely excessive restrictions

to the set net fleet. What do you think will happen on their low return years under current policy? We will not be allowed to participate in a fishery that is over 100 years old. All I'm asking for is that SEDM set netters are equally protected.