

## Alaska Board of Fisheries Committee Summary

# COMMITTEE D

### Northern Cook Inlet Escapement Goals, Commercial, Sport, and Subsistence Fishing January 31 – February 13, 2014

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#### Board Committee Members:

1. John Jensen, \*Chair
2. Tom Kluberton
3. Reed Morisky

#### Alaska Department of Fish and Game Staff Members:

1. Charles Swanton – Director, SFD
2. Tom Brookover – Deputy Director, SFD
3. Tom Vania – Regional Management Coordinator, SFD
4. Matt Miller – Regional Management Coordinator, SFD
5. Sam Ivey – Area Management Biologist, SFD
6. Sam Oslund – Assistant Area Management Biologist, SFD
7. Pat Shields – Area Management Biologist, CFD
8. Lisa Olson – Deputy Director, Subsistence
9. Davin Holen- Subsistence Program Manager, Southern Region
10. Bob Clark- Chief Fisheries Scientist, SFD
11. Tim Baker- Regional Management Coordinator, CFD
12. Kelly Hepler- Assistant Commissioner
13. Jack Erickson- Regional Fisheries Research Coordinator, SFD
14. Mark Willette, Area Research Biologist, CFD
15. Aaron Dupois, Assistant Area Management Biologist, CFD
16. Forrest Bowers, Deputy Director, CFD
17. Lowell Fair, Area Management Coordinator, CFD
18. Daryl Lescanec, Fisheries Biologist, SFD
19. Pete Cleary, Fisheries Biologist, SFD
20. Sarah Hazell, Subsistence Resource Specialist III, Subsistence

#### Alaska Wildlife Troopers

1. Burke Waldron

## Alaska Department of Law

1. Mike Mitchell

## Advisory Committee Members:

1. Terry Nininger, Mat-Su Valley AC
2. David Martin- Central Peninsula AC
3. Jennifer Ehmann, Mat-Su Valley AC
4. Jim Stubbs - Anchorage AC
5. Al Goozmer- Tyonek AC

## Public Panel Members:

1. Israel Payton, Self-Subsistence
2. Jeff Berger, Processor
3. Eric Huebsch, UCIDA
4. Cathrine Cassidy, Self
5. Paul Shadura, SOKI
6. Rod Arno, AOC
7. Andy Couch, Mat-Su Fish & Wildlife Commission
8. Howard Delo, Mat-Su Fish & Wildlife Commission
9. Dan Anderson, Self
10. Neil DeWitt, Self
11. Kenny Rogers, Northern District Setnet Assoc.
12. Page Herring, Northern District Setnet Assoc.
13. John McCombs, Self
14. Tom Rollman, Northern District Setnet
15. Stephen Braund, Northern District Setnet
16. Bruce Gabrys, Self – Drift Gillnet

## Federal Subsistence Representative:

1. George Pappas

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The Committee met February 10, 2014 at 10:30 a.m.–12:00 p.m., and 1:15 p.m.–4:15 p.m.

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PROPOSALS BEFORE THE COMMITTEE WERE: (32 total) 300, 301, 309, 313, 315, 321, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 310, 311, 312, 314, 316, 317, 322, 323, 376, 324, 325.

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**PROPOSAL 300 - 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.** Establish an optimal escapement goal (OEG) for Deshka River coho salmon.

**Comment Summary:**

Department: Have EO authority to manage Susitna coho now, but would only use it on the Deshka River if runs were obviously high or low. Sport fishery harvest rate is low (19%) and run timing is variable.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

**Public Panel Comments:**

- Deshka has many years of coho salmon escapement counts.
- Sport fishery may have higher exploitation rate due to the delayed run timing caused by warmer water temperatures.
- This would be a benchmark on the Susitna River; would provide some management capability.
- Management would occur late in the season and only on large or very small Deshka runs.
- BEG based on carrying capacity; need more data to establish this. OEG is allocative.
- Should not establish escapement goals if there isn't a proper foundation; unwise to go against department.
- Department manages better when they have a goal.
- Exploitation rate low because Deshka isn't accessible.
- Heard throughout board meeting that commercial fish interests want harvest based on abundance but based on abundance of what? The only coho goals in UCI are in high population centers; do commercial fishermen want abundance based on these areas?
- Lose capability to do effective in-season management with late run timing.
- Worried about pike and culverts.
- Asking for 6 years what the escapement goals are on nearby rivers (Theodore, Lewis and Nikolai) and no one knows; management goals are based on numbers and there are no numbers; continually asked for numbers so we can base proposals on facts.
- 900 systems in the Northern District; need more goals in total to aid in management of coho situation.

**Public Panel Recommendation:** No consensus.

**PROPOSAL 301 - 5 AAC 21.XXX. New Section and 5 AAC 61.XXX. New Section.** Adopt a sustainable escapement goal (SEG) established by the department or establish an optimal escapement goal (OEG) for Kashwitna River king salmon.

**Comment Summary:**

Department: None.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

**Public Panel Comments:**

- There should be more proactive management on this river.
- Believe there is adequate data going back to 1977 that should be used to establish goals.
- Same discussion as with the Deshka: can count fish on North Fork where water is clear-like Sheep Creek.
- Goal would give a benchmark to determine if there is abundance and to allow for potential liberalization; currently nothing to base a decision on.
- It is an aerial survey so it is a cost effective way to get numbers.
- If adding a bunch of goals then more money is needed from legislature; these things cost money.
- Kashwitna is accessible from multiple boat launches.
- Kashwitna Lake has pike, but it may not affect future production because Kashwitna Lake does not flow into the North Fork.
- Lakes in Talkeetna area are full of pike and flow into the Deshka river; the Deshka has lots of salmon and pike aren't affecting them as much as we think; food for thought.

**Public Panel Recommendation:** No consensus.

**PROPOSAL 309 - 5 AAC 21.XXX. New Section and 5 AAC 62.XXX. New Section.** Develop and adopt a sustainable escapement goal (SEG) or optimal escapement goal (OEG) for Big River and Kustatan River coho salmon.

**Comment Summary:**

Department: None.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

**Public Panel Comments:**

- Want a weir over there.
- Desire for a benchmark; coho escapement goals only in Knik Arm stream; would be beneficial for all users; may take a few years to develop an escapement goal.
- In Bob Clark's reports- small escapement of coho can bring about large returns; have to know what is going out of the systems to get complete picture.
- Worried about cost of monitoring.
- Need for conservation on the West side of Cook Inlet. No coho goals on West Side.
- Not opposed to having goals, but department needs to have information to set goals.
- Not practical to set goals without information.

**Public Panel Recommendation:** No consensus.

**PROPOSAL 313 - 5 AAC 21.XXX. New Section and 5 AAC 60.XXX. New Section.** Adopt a sustainable escapement goal (SEG) established by the department or establish an optimal escapement goal (OEG) for Little Susitna River sockeye salmon.

**Comment Summary:**

Department: Seeking funding for northern pike suppression in Nancy Lake where most sockeye production occurs. The Little Susitna River has little habitat except in this area.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

**Public Panel Comments:**

- Proposer will submit an RC withdrawing support.

**Public Panel Recommendation:** No recommendation due to proposer withdrawing support of proposal in RC 249.

**PROPOSAL 315 - 5 AAC 21.XXX. New Section and 5 AAC 60.XXX. New Section.** Adopt a sustainable escapement goal (SEG) established by the department or establish an optimal escapement goal (OEG) for Little Susitna River chum salmon.

**Comment Summary:**

Department: None.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

**Public Panel Comments:**

- Sport Fish logbook program is lacking a spot to report chum harvest.
- There is a reason why there are 6 proposals asking for goals across Cook Inlet; it's because there are no escapement goals and some view department management as passive management.
- All salmon are important to the ecosystem.
- Chum salmon are valuable to sport fishing; sometimes this is all that is available to catch.
- Need to get something started before things fall by the wayside: need to get Susitna back on its feet.
- Once you set a goal there will be allocation issues; will lead to future conflict.
- Department already has tools to liberalize or restrict harvest.
- Get science before the goal is set.
- Exploitation of chums by commercial fleet is low.
- The Little Susitna River is not a good indicator system because it is in a heavily urbanized area.
- Monitor chum salmon for humans and habitat but not in the urban areas.
- If department doesn't have adequate science and data when it sets a goal, then there will be implications for all the fisheries.
- There is science available on some of these escapement goal proposals to set a goal.

**Public Panel Recommendation:** No consensus.

**PROPOSAL 321 - 5 AAC 21.XXX. New Section and 5 AAC 60.XXX. New Section.** Adopt a sustainable escapement goal (SEG) established by the department or establish an optimal escapement goal (OEG) for Moose Creek king salmon.

**Comment Summary:**

Department: None.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

**Public Panel Comments:**

- Department mentioned there are no kings in the Matanuska River; but there is a king fishery on the Knik River and there is one in the Eklutna area.
- Department said they don't have any surplus kings for harvest but if there is no benchmark for the Matanuska system; how can it be managed?
- Chickaloon Tribal Organization has done habitat restoration on Moose Creek and has instream incubation boxes to boost king salmon numbers. Chickaloon would like to see the run build up to support a fishery.
- Should have a BEG before an OEG.
- Difficult to set a BEG; need stock specific harvest information.
- Need to get a hatchery program going in Northern Cook Inlet.

**Public Panel Recommendation:** No consensus.

**PROPOSAL 292 - 5 AAC 21.366. Northern District King Salmon Management Plan.** Modify management plan to restrict commercial king salmon fishing in the Northern District if sport fishing in the Deshka River is restricted to artificial lures, or close commercial king salmon fishing in the Northern District if sport fishing is restricted to catch and release or closed in Susitna River tributary streams upriver from the Deshka River.

**Comment Summary:**

Department: None.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

**Public Panel Comments:**

- Should have paired restrictions. Restriction would occur only when sport fishing is restricted.
- Restrictions on the Northern District and West Cook Inlet fishery have been discriminatory and opposes more restrictions on west Cook Inlet.
- These restrictions are pitting user groups against each other.
- In the past, tried to establish escapement from southern to northern district for the season and nothing was ever done.
- Commercial fishery is basically nonexistent in this area and there should not be further restrictions, because of biological reasons in the system.
- Only place to harvest king salmon for people who don't have a boat is on the Parks Highway streams. There has been zero opportunity to harvest a king on these streams in 2013.
- Kings are to be managed primarily for sport fishermen.
- Proposal has the option to reopen these fisheries.
- 17 king salmon goals in northern UCI; harvest was not allowed in 12 or 13 of these areas.
- Northern District setnetters are a low impact fishery; should not be more restricted since they catch less than 2% of king salmon run; is a minority fishery but important.
- Restrictions should not be paired; every area is different; only have 6 hours a week and it is important to fishermen and the industry.
- Restrictions to commercial fishery should not be put in regulation. Department has EO authority to restrict.

**Public Panel Recommendation:** No consensus.

**PROPOSAL 293 - 5 AAC 21.358. Northern District Salmon Management Plan.** Modify management plan to restrict commercial set gillnet fishing to one regular 12-hour period per week in the Northern District if sport fishing in the Deshka River is restricted to artificial lures; or close the Northern District to commercial fishing, if sport fishing is closed in the Little Susitna River, Fish Creek, Jim Creek, or Deshka River.

**Comment Summary:**

Department: None.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

**Public Panel Comments:**

- Objective is to have paired restrictions on sport and commercial fisheries; specifically the Northern District.
- In 2011, sport fishing was restricted on the Little Susitna River and then closed, yet there were no restrictions to commercial fishing.
- Coho are supposed to be managed primarily for sport fishing.
- In conservation mode, commercial and inriver fisheries are different; the divisions are managed differently; growing guide situation in Mat-Su area.
- Equal access doesn't mean everyone is going to be treated equally.
- Restricts one user group inordinately.
- Guiding industry needs to take some ownership.
- All users should share the burden of restrictions.
- Currently have adaptive management; EO authority is working well already.
- Commercial fishery has restrictions in both king fishery and sockeye fishery.

**Public Panel Recommendation:** No consensus.

**PROPOSAL 294 - 5 AAC 21.358. Northern District Salmon Management Plan.** Modify management plan to manage Northern District commercial salmon fisheries based on abundance of Northern District sockeye and coho salmon.

**Comment Summary:**

Department: Management plan provides authority to reduce gear in Northern District setnet fishery. EO authority can add nets back into fishery if sockeye escapement goals are met.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

**Public Panel Comments:**

- Proposal is looking for better science; better inseason management.
- Fish Creek is not an appropriate system to monitor for management of sockeye stocks, due to its inability to produce sockeye.
- Department may have EO authority but doesn't use it often.
- Hatchery enhancement on Fish Creek had mixed results.
- Two of the indicator systems have hatchery components on them, and parasite issues.
- Fish Creek/Big Lake is classified as an impaired waterbody.
- Using Little Susitna River and Fish Creek as indicator stocks is not good science.
- If you stock fisheries, you bring more people into the area and that increases pressure on wild stocks.
- Fish Creek has a goal and has met the goal more often than other systems.
- Not all Susitna River sockeye goals have been met.

**Public Panel Recommendation:** No consensus.

**PROPOSAL 295 - 5 AAC 21.358. Northern District Salmon Management Plan.** Amend management plan to remove references to Northern District coho, late-run Kenai River king, Kenai River coho salmon stocks, and add language that states the department shall manage common property fisheries for a reasonable opportunity to harvest salmon resources.

**Comment Summary:**

Department: None.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

**Public Panel Comments:**

- “Minimize” language to some people means “zero”; to others it means something else.
- Proposal provides continuity and puts everyone on the same playing field so that everyone has the same opportunity and is not discriminatory against certain user groups.
- Idea of managing for reasonable opportunity for all users makes sense.
- Purpose of preamble is to provide specific direction to the department about how they are supposed to manage these fisheries.
- Would result in less harvest; EOs usually impact users differently.

**Public Panel Recommendation:** No consensus.

**PROPOSAL 296 - 5 AAC 21.366. Northern District King Salmon Management Plan and 61.XXX. New Section.** Adopt a Deshka River king salmon management plan.

**Comment Summary:**

Department: Could increase confusion because actual preseason and inseason actions taken to manage Deshka could differ from the proposal plan. We are using a drainage wide approach where actions in the area affect other areas.

Department of Law: Management plans are typically allocative, such as the Northern District king plan where action in the sport fishery results in action in the commercial fishery. A plan based on weir-based triggers and dates within the sport fishery do not work well due to all variables that go into the decision making process.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

**Public Panel Comments:**

- Submitted this proposal because there are years of data available on kings and the department has used this information to make forecasts.
- Deshka River ranks high enough to have its own management plan.
- Replace the word “shall” with “may” in the proposal.
- Would let people know what is likely to occur in the upcoming season.
- Proposal is only for the sport fishery and not for the commercial fishery.
- People would like to know by this time of year what the season will be like and this plan would help them; lodge owners can plan.
- Takes away flexibility to manage the resources: suggested triggers wont work.
- In-river guide industry more efficient than unguided anglers.
- Department already has tools to manage the fishery.
- Pre-plan could alleviate angler confusion; high level of frustration from stakeholders because they don't know what will happen.

**Public Panel Recommendation:** No consensus.

**PROPOSAL 297 - 5 AAC 21.366. Northern District King Salmon Management Plan and 5 AAC 61.XXX. New Section.** Adopt a Deshka River king salmon management plan.

**Comment Summary:**

Department: None.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

**Public Panel Comments:**

- See comments in Proposal 296.

**Public Panel Recommendation:** No consensus.

**PROPOSAL 298 - 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.** Allow use of bait in the Deshka River on June 1 instead of May 15.

**Comment Summary:**

Department: None.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

**Public Panel Comments:**

- Concern about the health of the stocks; users have voluntarily asked for more restrictions to help with the king salmon run.
- Not a meaningful contribution; meaningless gesture that doesn't do anything about the problems in the river.
- Not a small meaningless gesture; use of bait increases their chances by 50%.
- Believes early run fish are not bound for Deshka but streams further up the Susitna River.
- Good idea to start without bait, helps reduce catch-and-release mortality.
- Valley anglers are willing to do what they have to do to conserve king salmon.

**Public Panel Recommendation:** No consensus.

**PROPOSAL 299 - 5 AAC 61.XXX. New Section. Stock Deshka River with king salmon.**

Allow for the enhancement of Deshka king salmon.

**Comment Summary:**

Department: None.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

**Public Panel Comments:**

- This is a system that is virtually unlimited in terms of traffic and demand far exceeds the supply.
- Deshka is not in an urban area.
- Deshka River provides some of the largest king salmon production in the Susitna River and provides the most liberal sport fishing opportunity in all Upper Cook Inlet; had some bad years but overall doing better than many other systems.
- Enhancing the most productive system doesn't make sense.
- If we are having problems getting wild fish back, what chance do you have in getting stocked fish back?
- Why wouldn't we enhance that system if it is very productive?
- Deshka was overescaped and that might have effects on production.
- Need to find out what is going on in the system first; restrictive measures do not necessarily mean you will get returns.
- Wants to increase Deshka kings; worried about pike.
- Before we stock this system, we need to know about juvenile production.

**Public Panel Recommendation:** No consensus.

**PROPOSAL 302 - 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.** Prohibit sport fishing for all salmon in Larson Creek and its confluence with the Talkeetna River from June 1–September 30.

**Comment Summary:**

Department: None.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

**Public Panel Comments:**

- Larsen Lake is one of the indicator lakes.
- Heavily used fishery at the mouth could unnecessarily skew escapement.
- Expanded fishery at the confluence of Larsen creek and ATV trail there.
- Precautionary measures to get the escapement into Larsen Lake.
- There are other places that people can go to fish.
- Supports department position and department has the ability to manage the fishery.
- Sport fishery is not expanding.
- Would you also close commercial fishing to meet escapement?
- Larson Lake is a fishery reserve stock that could be used to propagate other areas.
- The board needs to address emerging fisheries.
- Need to be proactive before a problem arises.
- Direct contact with long-time residents said the fishery is not increasing.
- Board has a mandate to track.
- Larsen Creek is a marginal place to fish at best; Susitna and Talkeetna systems are extremely silty; aren't going to catch fish in most areas. Very few clear-water areas available to catch fish.
- Escapement has been met and sport fishing harvest is low.

**Public Panel Recommendation:** No consensus.

**PROPOSAL 303 - 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.** Prohibit sport fishing in Larson Creek and its confluence with Talkeetna River from June 15–August 15.

**Comment Summary:**

Department: None.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

Public Panel Comments:

- See comments under Proposal 302.

**Public Panel Recommendation:** No consensus.

**PROPOSAL 304 - 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.** Prohibit sport fishing at the outlet of Larson Lake.

**Comment Summary:**

Department: None.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

Public Panel Comments:

- See comments under proposal 302.

**Public Panel Recommendation:** No consensus.

**PROPOSAL 305 - 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.** Close the Fish Creek drainage to sport fishing for salmon.

**Comment Summary:**

Department: None.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

**Public Panel Comments:**

- Reference comments made under Proposal 302.
- Proposal brought by a local who is concerned about the resource.
- Proactive measure on a small spawning stream.

**Public Panel Recommendation:** No consensus.

**PROPOSAL 306 - 5 AAC 61.112. Special provisions and localized additions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for Unit 1 of the Susitna River Drainage Area and 5 AAC 61.118. Special provisions and localized additions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for Unit 4 of the Susitna River Drainage Area.** Move several lakes from Unit 4 of the Susitna River drainage to Unit 1.

**Comment Summary:**

Department: None.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

Public Panel Comments: None.

**Public Panel Recommendation:** Consensus to support.

**PROPOSAL 307 - 5 AAC 01.593. Upper Yentna River subsistence salmon fishery.** Extend subsistence salmon fishery from July 31 to the first Monday, Wednesday, and Friday in August.

**Comment Summary:**

Department: None.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

**Public Panel Comments:**

- Many RCs supporting this proposal.
- This is a reasonable request.
- They know the importance of subsistence to their village and to other people as well.
- Regulations do not provide reasonable opportunity due to late run timing, flooding and dwindling harvest numbers.
- Most restrictive subsistence fishery in the state.
- Subsistence has priority over all other user groups.
- Should be left as it is; there might be substantial restrictions on other users and subsistence harvest levels are being met.
- Allows a more reasonable opportunity.
- Three open days in August is important to the people in that area.
- Maybe three days is too much.

**Public Panel Recommendation:** No consensus.

**PROPOSAL 308 - 5 AAC 01.593. Upper Yentna River subsistence salmon fishery.** Allow salmon to be harvested by dip net upstream of the Yentna/Susitna confluence to an ADF&G marker located 300 feet downstream of the department's Yentna River sonar.

**Comment Summary:**

Department: None.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

**Public Panel Comments:**

- Would provide a reasonable opportunity for subsistence users and would allow Anchorage residents to participate in a subsistence area.
- Most restrictive subsistence fishery in Cook Inlet and the state.
- Large allocative consequences. Fully allocated fishery.
- There are constitutional issues and habitat issues.
- Years ago the board underestimated the future growth and harvest in the Kenai River PU fishery. Should consider side-boards on this proposed fishery.
- Creating a new fishery right below a sonar counter could have a negative effect on the fishery; this could have negative consequences for in-season management. However a shortage would be noticed quickly.
- Chelatna Lake currently supports largest stock in the Yentna drainage and has exceeded escapement; Judd Lake has not been meeting escapement.
- Cheaper and easier to have a dipnet than a fish wheel and easier to access because it is closer.
- Subsistence Division has shown that the dipnet is a traditional tool for harvesting.
- All of the Yentna salmon with the exception of king salmon have a customary and traditional use finding; this wouldn't be developing a new fishery but rather expanding the opportunity; it could happen anywhere on the Yentna River as the law reads.

**Public Panel Recommendation:** No consensus.

**PROPOSAL 310 - 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 Drainages Area.** Allow harvest of king and coho salmon only on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays in the Little Susitna River, and reduce harvest limits.

**Comment Summary:**

Department: None.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

**Public Panel Comments:**

- Since restocking has stopped, escapement has dwindled.
- Reduced harvest opportunity should be considered unless restocking happens again.
- Until enhancement program starts, these restrictions seem appropriate.
- Department already has tools in the toolbox to manage the fishery.
- Department's comments are not consistent with the amount of fish that people are harvesting.
- Precludes valley residents from fishing the Little Susitna; would have to take time off from work during the week to fish.
- Sport Fish Division has already taken restrictive actions; confidence in department to use EO authority.
- Susitna restrictions will make people fish in other areas and cause potential problems elsewhere.
- Guide businesses on the Little Susitna River have declined over the past 5 years. There were 15 guides 5 years ago and only 4 operated last year.
- Many restrictions are already in place on the fishery.
- This is an important fishery to the area.
- Catch and release mortality is high.
- Comments that there are no conservation concerns are inconsistent with comments that there are not enough fish available.

**Public Panel Recommendation:** No consensus.

**PROPOSAL 311 - 5 AAC 60.XXX. New Section.** Direct the department to begin stocking coho salmon into the Little Susitna River.

**Comment Summary:**

Department: None.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

**Public Panel Comments:**

- Stocking fish in the drainage is a slippery slope.
- What Chickaloon Village Tribal Council is doing on Moose Creek is likely going to work and has merit but we need to be careful about stocking random streams.
- This might be beneficial to everybody.
- Little Susitna stock is a hybridized stock.
- Former stocking program did not use stocks from outside the Little Susitna River.
- Little Susitna has the only current escapement goal for coho salmon in the Susitna drainage.
- This would be a continuation of the stocking program that they suspended in 1993.
- There is a reason why department has strict protocol about hatchery programs (i.e., genetic implications and disease implications); they have learned from past programs.
- Would be 7-10 years before you see fish coming back from a stocking program; this will not fix the problem tomorrow.
- Sport fishermen harvested 69,000 coho salmon and released 59,000 coho salmon on the Susitna and Knik.
- Enhancement doesn't have to be in fresh water, could stock marine waters.

**Public Panel Recommendation:** No consensus.

**PROPOSAL 312 - 5 AAC 60.XXX. New Section.** Direct the department to begin stocking coho salmon into the Little Susitna River.

**Comment Summary:**

Department: None.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

Public Panel Comments:

- See comments in Proposal 311.

**Public Panel Recommendation:** No consensus.

**PROPOSAL 314 - 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 Drainages Area.** Open Little Susitna River sockeye salmon sport fishery by emergency order (EO) and only when escapement of 2,500 sockeye salmon can be projected.

**Comment Summary:**

Department: None.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

**Public Panel Comments:**

- Abundance is low, with a count of 236 sockeye in 2013.
- Reduce harvest of Little Susitna River sockeye salmon by all users.

**Public Panel Recommendation:** No consensus.

**PROPOSAL 316 - 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 Drainages Area.** Require use of four-stroke outboard motors on Little Susitna River and limit the number of outboards on the river per day.

**Comment Summary:**

Department: None.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

Department of Public Safety: No way to track how many boats are in the river every other day.  
This would be problematic and prefer prescribed days instead of rotating days.

**Public Panel Comments:**

- Reports about hydrocarbons in this high use area.
- Protect the resource by using four stroke engines.
- Can't have continued high usage without taking measures and enhancement.
- Need to wait until Department of Environmental Conservation makes a determination.
- Access to the fishery is difficult without a boat.
- Board doesn't have authority to limit outboard motors on the river.
- In 2008, another agency had declared the Kenai as impaired and board did not act until there was already a documented impaired river situation.
- Concerned about cost of switching to new four stroke motor.
- This proposal would reduce amount of time they could fish on the Little Susitna River.
- Advance public notice of motor requirements could inform future purchasing decisions.
- Inexpensive apparatus is available to modify a two-stroke engine so it doesn't exhaust into water.

**Public Panel Recommendation:** No consensus.

**PROPOSAL 317 - 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 Drainages Area.** Prohibit sport fishing from a boat during the coho salmon season on the Little Susitna River.

**Comment Summary:**

Department: None.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

Department of Public Safety: See comments in Proposal 316.

Public Panel Comments:

- See comments in Proposal 316.

**Public Panel Recommendation:** No consensus.

**PROPOSAL 322 - 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 Drainages Area.** Amend area open to sport fishing for king salmon in the Eklutna Tailrace.

**Comment Summary:**

Department: None.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

**Public Panel Comments:**

- Opposition because hatchery may be used again in the future.
- Concerned with safety issues in areas owned by Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association.
- Great place for a hatchery program, where habitat degradation and genetics are not an issue.
- Relieves pressure on wild stocks.
- Support additional stocked fisheries to meet demand.

**Public Panel Recommendation:** No consensus.

**PROPOSAL 323 - 5 AAC 60.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Knik Arm Drainages Area.** Create a youth-only fishery in the Eklutna Tailrace.

**Comment Summary:**

Department: We would use markers to designate youth-only area. Would be similar to Nick Dudiak Fishing Lagoon youth-only fishery in Homer where section is designated and adults can still fish upstream or downstream.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

Department of Public Safety: Something can be worked out with the department regarding markers and it wouldn't be difficult to administer.

**Public Panel Comments:**

- This proposal is beneficial to children because they always have to compete with adult anglers at that location.
- Great place for kids to fish.
- Could provide an excellent learning opportunity to teach the next generation.
- This proposal does not take fishing opportunity away from adults.
- Hatchery program is working well.
- Takes place in a terminal fishery and does not add pressure to wild stocks.

**Public Panel Recommendation:** Consensus to support.

**PROPOSAL 376 - 5 AAC 60.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Knik Arm Drainages Area.** Create a youth-only coho salmon fishery in the Eklutna Tailrace.

**Comment Summary:**

Department: See comments in Proposal 323.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

Trooper: See comments in Proposal 323.

Public Panel Comments:

- See comments in Proposal 323.

**Public Panel Recommendation:** Consensus to support.

**PROPOSAL 324 - 5 AAC 60.120. General provisions for season, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Knik Arm Drainage Area.** Update stocked lakes list for the Knik Arm drainage area.

**Comment Summary:**

Department: None.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

Public Panel Comments: None.

**Public Panel Recommendation:** Consensus to support.

**PROPOSAL 325\_ 5 AAC 59.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Anchorage Bowl Drainages Area.** Reduce bag limit for landlocked king and other salmon in Anchorage stocked lakes.

**Comment Summary:**

Department: None.

Department of Law: None.

Federal Subsistence Representative: None.

Public Panel Comments: None.

**Public Panel Recommendation:** Consensus to support.