

RC 025

On the issue of closing sport fishing for red salmon in Resurrection Bay.

The entire issue seems to revolve around money. Money for Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association. Nothing else. Too bad for the people that have harvested the reds in Resurrection Bay for generations.

In the 1960s, the ADF&G poisoned Bear Lake and killed every fish in it. At the time, I, along with several others were on site protesting this. The Troopers were called and told us we would be arrested if we didn't immediately leave and let ADF&G continue their "fish genocide". This was supposedly done to rid the lake of "stickleback" parasitic, very small fish. It turned out to be aimed at killing the red salmon run in Bear Lake in order to make more habitat for spawning, "sporty" silver salmon. The weir was installed on Bear Creek for the purpose of exterminating the natural red salmon run into Bear Lake and enhancing the silver salmon there because the red salmon wouldn't bite for "sports fishermen" and the silvers would out in the bay, thus generating more income in the Seward area via sportsmen coming to Seward to fish for silvers. Before the reds could be completely exterminated, a new study was conducted on the silvers and, lo and behold, the majority of silvers go up the Resurrection River drainage to spawn. By that time, Cook Inlet Aquaculture had the hatchery just north of Moose Pass in operation. They recognized that the red salmon spawn could be hatched in their hatchery and sold, state wide, for enough profit to further their "non-profit" operation. They then started enhancing the run of red salmon into Bear Lake, though at a limited number, but enough for their purposes of selling the red salmon smolt state wide. CIAA then claimed exclusive ownership of all red and silver salmon running up Bear Creek and into Bear Lake to spawn and thus giving them a continuous supply of salmon roe/eggs for their hatchery operation to thrive. ADF&G supported them and still does. The weir completely blocks Bear Creek and CIAA only allows a limited number of reds and silvers into the lake. After those numbers are reached, CIAA closes off Bear Creek and traps the remaining salmon in the creek below the weir and for a couple miles downstream from the weir. This, in effect, creates an artificial bait station that attracts an inordinate number of brown bears into the area, causing a very dangerous situation for Bear Creek area residents living in the area. This "bear baiting" is highly illegal for any citizen to do except for a highly regulated process for black bears only. Now, a couple of years ago, CIAA decided to take the red salmon in a completely different direction. They now take the red salmon eggs from Bear Lake, hatch them in their hatchery and release them in manmade lagoons near the mouth of Fourth of July creek for "imprinting". I have heard they intend to eliminate, once again, the red salmon run in Bear Lake? True or not, it seems they are intent on doing it.

The entire process of eliminating the red salmon resource from any harvest of local residents is extremely radical. It's wrong. All to maintain enough profit for CIAA to make more money. I firmly believe that the weir on Bear Creek should be removed and the entire creek/lake system returned to mother nature, who did a fine job for thousands of years. The CIAA can obtain their salmon eggs to sustain their "cost recovery", or profit, from Cook Inlet, the same way they obtain king salmon smolt to create the artificial run of kings in Resurrection Bay.

Let mother nature manage the salmon resource in Resurrection Bay. It belongs to the people, not CIAA. Plain and simple. If the new scheme to eliminate the people in order to enhance CIAA money, It's WRONG!!!

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