

1/12/2017

Tom Walters

Alaska Board of Fisheries
P.O. Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811

Kodiak Board Meeting

Proposal 63

Close all waters within a 500 yard radius of the terminus Ayakulik River to commercial salmon fishing June 1st to July 15th

Is it the Board of Fish and Alaska Department of Fish and Game's policy to prioritize yield of sockeye salmon over conservation and production concerns of declining Ayakulik River chinook salmon?

We have heard many public comments opposing Proposal #62 and #63 sighting by having the river terminus open is an effective tool to prevent sockeye salmon over escapement into the Ayakulik River.

With adding total **Inner** Ayakulik commercial harvest of sockeye salmon by July 15th to the total Ayakulik River sockeye salmon weir count by July 15th, only once was there an over escapement of the early run SEG goal of **140,000 to 280,000** in the past ten years within 2014 with a count of 18,743 sockeye salmon over.

Note Prior to 2011, the Ayakulik River SEG was not divided into early and late run goals.

The SEG was **200,000 to 500,000**. Fishery Manuscript Series No. 16-09

Appendix 1.

Ayakulik River sockeye salmon July 15th weir counts: 2007 to 2016

ADF&G Web Site Sport Fish Counts

2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
169,596	96,912	200,648	183,259	177,280	213,501	214,911	210,040	217,959	182,589

Appendix 2.

Inner Ayakulik commercial sockeye harvest by July 15th: 2007 to 2016

ADF&G Regional Information Report 4K 16-04

2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
0	0	0	31,945	7,262	15,561	16,259	88,703	14,044	0

Appendix 3.

July 15th Ayakulik River sockeye salmon weir count **IF** commercial sockeye harvest from Inner Ayakulik was added

2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
169,596	96,912	200,648	215,204	184,542	229,062	231,170	298,743	232,003	182,589

Appendix 4.

Ayakulik River sockeye salmon July 15th to end of season weir counts: 2007 to 2016

60,000 to 120,000 late run SEG

Fishery Manuscript Series No. 16-092 Appendix D2 / ADF&G Web Site Sport Fish Counts

NOTE Prior to 2011, The Ayakulik River SEG was not divided into early and late run goals. SEG was 200,000 to 500,000.

2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
113,446	65,976	114,536	60,394	83,661	114,753	67,195	87,671	108,257	72,378

Will next illustrate the total final season Ayakulik River sockeye salmon weir count with the **Inner** Ayakulik commercial harvest by July 15th added. Not once did the escapement go over the combined early run of **140,000 to 280,000** and late run **60,000 to 120,000** SEG. **400,000** higher total.

NOTE Prior to 2011, the Ayakulik River SEG was not divided into early and late run goals. SEG was 200,000 to 500,000.

Fishery Manuscript Series No. 16-09

Appendix 5.

Ayakulik River sockeye salmon end of the season weir counts: 2007 to 2016

ADF&G Web Site Sport Fish Counts

2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
282,433	162,588	315,184	243,453	261,141	328,254	282,106	297,711	326,435	254,967

Appendix 6.

Inner Ayakulik commercial sockeye harvest by July 15th: 2007 to 2016

ADF&G Regional Information Report 4K 16-04

2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
0	0	0	31,945	7,262	15,561	16,259	88,703	14,044	0

Appendix 7.

Ayakulik River sockeye final season weir count **IF** commercial sockeye harvest from Inner Ayakulik was added

2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
282,433	162,588	315,184	275,398	268,403	343,815	298,365	386,414	340,479	254,967

Ayakulik chinook salmon has failed to meet the minimum BEG escapement goal five out of the last ten years, including 2014 when less than 1,000 chinooks returned. More than 80% less than the minimum goal of 4,000.

Prior to 2002, the BEG for Ayakulik River chinooks was 6,500 – 10,000.

2002 to 2009, the BEG was 4,800 - 9,600.

2010 to 2016, the BEG was 4,000 - 7,000.

A new BEG to take effect in 2017 is now 4,800 – 8,400.

Appendix 8.

Ayakulik River chinook salmon weir counts: 2007 to 2016

ADF&G Web Site Sport Fish Counts

2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
6,535	3,071	2,615	5,301	4,316	4,760	2,369	917	2,392	4,594

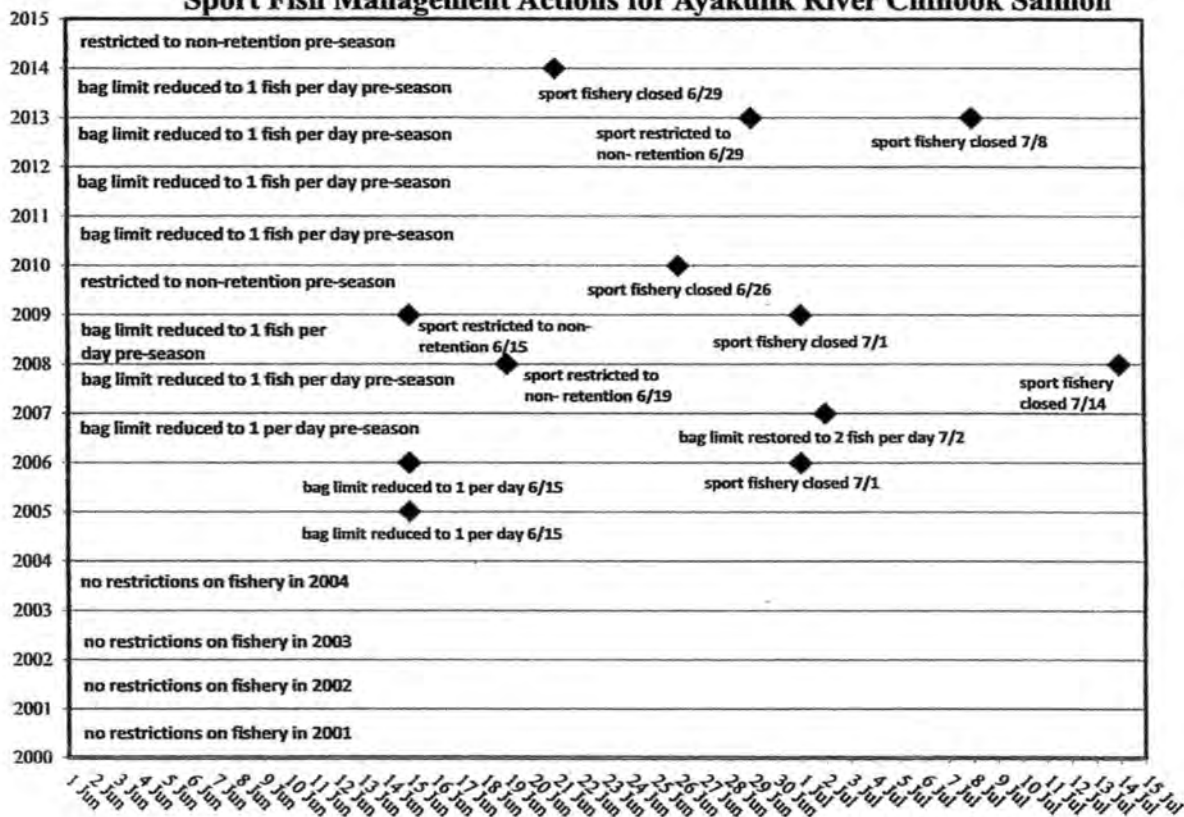
Ayakulik chinook salmon sport fishing on the Ayakulik River has had a variety of restrictions by Emergency Orders since 2005. These range from catch and release, closed completely, prohibition of bait, and single hooks only.

Emergency Order 2-KS-4-09-16, posted March 15th, 2016 – Closed the Ayakulik River to king salmon sport fishing beginning June 1st.

Emergency Order 2-KS-4-32-16, posted July 6th, 2016 – Opened the Ayakulik River to catch and release king salmon sport fishing beginning July 6th.

There are six federally permitted sport fishing guides on the Ayakulik River system. Each guide is allocated a maximum of six guest per day. Summer divides the river in half with three guides permitted to fish the lower river system and three guides permitted to fish the upper river. For the last six years, only three of the six permitted guides operate in the summer months due to the lack of king salmon fishing and interest. Sockeye fishing and bear viewing is the main activities during the summer months of June and July.

Sport Fish Management Actions for Ayakulik River Chinook Salmon



Appendix F2.—History of management of Ayakulik River Chinook salmon sport fishery.

Graph sited from
Fishery Management Report No. 16-39

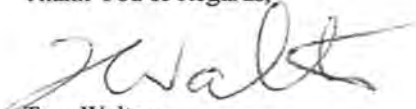
We ask the Board of Fisheries to please consider approving Proposal #63. Commercial salmon fishing would still be able to operate each year within a 500 yard closed radius around the terminus of the Ayakulik River from June 1st to July 15th during the king salmon run time.

2014 Ayakulik River chinook salmon was a devastating return of only 917. Having a continuous opener within the Inner Ayakulik including the terminus of the river for a total of **11 days** from June 5th at noon to June 15th at 9:00 p.m. is NOT a short fishing period. An extended opener to the river's terminus for this long of a period without data to show the number of kings being released nor survival rate when the mouth is continuously "corked" is not a wise conservation method. Is "corking" off the mouth of a river system for extended periods now an approved conservation method to "share" the burden of conservation?

If the Board of Fisheries opposes Proposal #63, please take into consideration limited amount of time the Inner Ayakulik including the terminus can be commercially fished, days off in between fishing periods, etc.

The Ayakulik River can't afford to take another chance on a future Inner Ayakulik commercial opener including the terminus that last for **11 days** straight during the king salmon run time.

Thank You & Regards,



Tom Walters

