

Public comment
Nov 30, 2016, 7:23:21 AM
From Chris Perry to you

RC 017

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Thank you for holding these meetings in Homer, and the opportunity to comment on these proposals.

My name is Chris Perry. I have lived in Homer and seined LCI for most of 32 years.

I am here to ask you to oppose proposal 39 relating to the 50-50 allocation of Bear Lake sockeye, and proposal 41, which removes near shore waters from the special harvest area in Res. bay.

I have participated in the common property and cost recovery fisheries most of the years they have been open in Res. Bay.

Concerning Proposal 39, I support the current Trails Lake hatchery management plan as written. The enhanced fisheries in LCI often make it possible to salvage a poor fishing season. These enhanced fisheries also allow substantial opportunity to resident and non-resident, sport and personal use harvest of multiple species of salmon. Cost recovery has become the main vehicle for financing these projects, and finding other support of these fisheries will be more challenging as state and federal money is less available.

The 50-50 allocation can and may be realized under the current management plan, sooner than later. A larger common property harvest can occur at any time. This depends on enhanced run strength in all of Cook Inlet, and market variability. I feel we have been lucky to have this potential with the different Cook Inlet projects.

Concerning proposal 41, I have participated in the Res. bay cost recovery, as well as other cost recovery projects in LCI. The ability to conduct cost recovery in Res. bay is challenging at least and difficult at best. Due to wind, weather and tides, there are few days when cost recovery can be done all day every day. The sockeye in Res. bay can't be schooled up with barrier seines or weirs, as are most often used in hatcheries around the state. The fish sometimes school up at certain stages of the tide, or times of day.

In recent years, there has been a smolt release from salt water net pens near the chip pile and Spring creek. There has been some success in the return of this portion of the run to school in the vicinity of the net pens, mostly along the beaches on that side of the bay. Removal of the near shore fishery will substantially reduce the ability to conduct cost recovery on these fish.

Since the net pen release, the sport and personal use fishery has migrated away from the river and the river mouth to the shore side on the East side of the bay from 4th of July creek to Spring creek, and the chip pile beaches. Prior to net pen release, I believe there was little if any sockeye harvest from these beaches. CIAA has provided substantial opportunity to the resident and nonresident sport fisheries in Res bay with these sockeye and coho later in the season. Unfortunately, a large portion of fishermen don't realize these fish won't be there in large numbers if we don't continue this project, and pay for it with salt water cost recovery harvest.

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In 2016, portions of these beaches were closed to cost recovery daily from 6 am to 10pm, to minimize conflict between sport and cost recovery harvest. In 2016, a large part of the run was and had to be harvested in the river at the weir. The quality of the weir harvested fish can reduce the value of cost recovery substantially. Salt water harvest often allows grounds prices over \$3.00/ pound.

It's been generous to provide this opportunity to fishermen with no limits or closures, due to low river escapements. It must be understood that this enhanced fishery, and other CI projects can and will disappear if they can't be paid for. Please also understand that there have been years that conducting cost recovery has been at a near financial loss for catcher boats, due to Res. Bay run size and difficult Res. Bay. variables. Fortunately there are CI fishermen that see the potential value of our enhanced fisheries, and are willing to support these ventures as times change..

I will ask you again to oppose proposals 39 and 41. Thank you for your time. If you have any questions, I am glad to try and answer them.

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