

March 3, 2017
Submitted for public comment

My name is Laurie Fagnani, and I am a 50-year Alaskan resident living in Alaska and have summer property in Kenai. I would like to make comments on the changes currently underway at the 2017 board of Fish meeting.

I have been following your actions at the 2017 board of fish meetings and am appalled by the apparent overrun by the Board of Fish (BOF) to reverse 40 years of scientific-based fisheries management. It would appear that the BOF came to this meeting with a mandate slanted towards prioritizing commercial fish over sport anglers. Unfortunately, your actions here have seriously jeopardized not only the famous Kenai king salmon, but also unraveled years of hard work and collaboration to sustain healthy fish returns on the Kenai and Kasilof rivers. Does either side really win if we catch the last king salmon?

Dip netting:

I have been a dip netter since the program started. I enjoy dipping from a free floating boat. This a tradition enjoyed by my three-generation family here in Alaska. And, its where we and 30,000 other Alaskans get most of our subsistence fish. It is my request that you leave this fishery alone. It's working fine. The problem is not enough fish getting into the Kenai.

And by the way, for every day I go dip netting, we drop about \$300 in gas, food, license, clothing, and lodging. The economic impact to the Kenai, Kasilof, Homer and Anchorage economy is huge. With 30,000 licensed personal use anglers, that has to add up. In fact, I am sure when tallied as a comparision to the economic impact of the commercial fleet on local economies, sport fishing has to come out on top.

Kenai River regulàtions on king salmon conservation

By expanding the commercial fishing times/day's on both the Kenai and Kasilof rivers the BOF threatens to add additional harm to the already struggling King salmon returns. It is well documented that set netter are very effective at catching fish and their king salmon by-catch can be up to 300 kings per week. That in itself should be motivation enough for a Board of Fish to keep the set net regulation the same as last year, or to reduced their fishing times further. Even better, why don't you find a way to incentivize set netter to use shallow nets allowing for king salmon to escape. This is not an issues of sport fish over commercial, it about the preservation of a river system and the species that live it.

It is important to me that when I purchase an annual fishing license, I know that I am able to fish and catch my limit. To do that the Board of Fish must allow enough fish into the South Central river system to give residents the opportunity to catch a fish.

Thank you.

Laurie Fagnani

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