

2017 Upper Cook Inlet Finfish Meeting Roadmap

Alaska Board of Fisheries

UPPER COOK INLET FINFISH

February 23–March 8, 2017 Anchorage Sheraton Hotel, Anchorage

TENTATIVE PROPOSAL ROADMAP

(174 proposals)

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE-GROUP 1: Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan and Upper Subdistrict Set Gillnet Fishery (15 Proposals – Chair: Ruffner)

Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan (7 Proposals)

- Review the optimal escapement goal (OEG) and inriver goals for Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon.
- Amend the *Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan* to remove the optimal escapement goal for Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon.
- Remove the optimal escapement goal for Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon and add the guided sport fishery to the list of fisheries managed under the plan.
- Amend management plan to achieve inriver goal range of 850,000–1,050,000 late-run sockeye salmon at run strengths less than 2.3 million sockeye salmon and 950,000–1,150,000 late-run sockeye salmon at run strengths greater than 2.3 million sockeye salmon.
- Decrease the inriver goal ranges for late-run Kenai River sockeye salmon by 100,000 fish and limit the bag and possession of sockeye salmon to three per day and three in possession in the Kenai River sport fishery.
- Repeal and readopt management plan to remove the optimal escapement goal, mandatory restrictions and closed fishing periods or "windows", and specify that management will be based on the abundance of late-run Kenai River sockeye salmon.
- Remove mandatory closed fishing periods or "windows" from the Upper Subdistrict commercial set gillnet fishery.

Upper Subdistrict Set Gillnet Fishery (8 Proposals)

- Remove restrictions in the Upper Subdistrict commercial set gillnet fishery and allow for regular weekly fishing periods through July 20 with additional fishing periods based on inseason abundance.
- Redefine sections and manage the commercial set gillnet fishery in the Upper Subdistrict with three sections with staggered opening dates.



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- Remove "one-percent rule", where the commercial set gillnet fishery will close after July 31, if less than one percent of the season's total sockeye is harvested in two consecutive fishing periods.
- Remove the one-percent rule that applies to the commercial set gillnet fishery in the Upper Subdistrict after July 31 so that the set gillnet fishery will close August 15 and be managed using regular fishing periods from August 11 through August 15.
- Repeal the one-percent rule, as it applies to the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery so that the set gillnet fishery will close August 15.
- Allow commercial fishing with set gillnets in the North Kalifonsky Beach (NKB), statistical area 244-32, within 660 feet of shore with shallow nets only, when the Kasilof Section is open, on or after July 8.
- Allow a set gillnet to be up to 45 fathoms in length and a Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission limited entry permit holder to operate up to 135 fathoms of set gillnet gear when commercial fishing with set gillnets 29 meshes or less in depth.
- Limit the depth of all set gillnet gear in Upper Subdistrict of the Central District to no more than 29 meshes deep.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE-GROUP 2: Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan (18 Proposals – Chair: Jeffrey)

Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon (18 Proposals)

- 162 Establish an optimal escapement goal for Kenai River late-run king salmon.
- Prohibit bait on runs less than 22,000 and eliminate 12-hour fishing period restriction.
- Prohibit use of bait in the late-run Kenai River king salmon fishery until escapement goals have been met.
- Start the Kenai River king salmon sport fisheries as unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure, no retention.
- Decrease the projected inriver run goal of late-run king salmon to 19,000 fish and remove the Upper Subdistrict commercial set gillnet fishery from "paired" restrictions.
- Remove restrictions to the Kenai River sport and personal use fisheries and the Upper Subdistrict commercial set gillnet fishery in July and August.
- Remove restrictions to the Kenai River sport and personal use fisheries and the Upper Subdistrict commercial set gillnet fishery in July and August.
- Remove "paired" restrictions in the Kenai River sport and personal use fisheries and the Upper Subdistrict commercial set gillnet fishery.
- 167 Close the Kenai River personal use fishery when the late run king salmon sport fishery is closed.
- Remove provisions (e)(3)(A) (i) and (ii) that restrict the number and/or depth of commercial set gillnets fished by a Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission limited entry permit holder in the Upper Subdistrict if the use of bait is prohibited in the Kenai River sport fishery.
- 175 Clarify the length and depth of set gillnets that may be used in the Upper Subdistrict commercial salmon fishery, if the use of bait is prohibited in the Kenai River sport fishery.



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- Remove the commercial set gillnet fishery in the Kasilof Section from "paired" restrictions in the *Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan*.
- Allow commercial set gillnet fishing periods in the Kenai and Kasilof sections to be managed separately, with regard to "paired" restrictions, if the use of bait is prohibited in the Kenai River sport fishery.
- Allow commercial fishing periods in the Kasilof and Kenai/East Forelands sections to be opened separately, with regard to "paired" restrictions, if the use of bait is prohibited in the Kenai River sport fishery.
- Decrease the trigger for management actions on Kenai River late-run king salmon from 22,500 to 16,500.
- 166 Modify season dates and area for Kenai River late-run king salmon management.
- Repeal and readopt the *Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan*.
- Reconsider "paired" restrictions to the Kenai River sport and personal use fisheries and the Upper Subdistrict commercial set gillnet fishery.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE-GROUP 3: Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan (17 Proposals – Chair: Payton)

Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan (17 Proposals)

- Replace the optimal escapement goal with the sustainable escapement goal for Kasilof River sockeye salmon.
- Replace the optimal escapement goal with a sustainable escapement goal for Kasilof River sockeye salmon.
- Replace the optimal escapement goal with the current biological escapement goal for Kasilof River sockeye salmon.
- Amend management plan to remove all restrictions and manage the commercial set gillnet fishery to harvest surplus Kasilof River sockeye salmon.
- Open the commercial set gillnet fishery in the Kasilof Section as early as June 20 if the department estimates 50,000 sockeye salmon will be in the Kasilof River before June 25.
- Allow commercial fishing with set gillnets within 600 feet of shore in the Kasilof Section, with fishing time occurring 600 feet or less offshore not subject to the hourly restrictions in the *Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan*.
- Amend management plan to allow commercial fishing with set gillnet gear in the Kasilof Section within one-half mile of shore and eliminate the provision allowing commercial fishing with set gillnet gear only within 600 feet of shore in the Kasilof Section.
- Add a 24-hour no fishing window on Tuesday in the Kasilof Section through July 7 and adopt mandatory no fishing windows in the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area after July 7.
- Reduce the closed fishing period or "window" and increase additional fishing time with set gillnet gear in the Kasilof Section.
- Allow commercial fishing with set gillnet gear in the North Kalifonsky Beach statistical area (NKB stat area 244-32) when the upper end of the Kasilof sockeye salmon escapement goal range is projected to be exceeded.



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- 109 Provide clarification on the use of gear in the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area (KRSHA) for individuals who hold two Cook Inlet set gillnet Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC) limited entry permits.
- Allow a Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission limited entry permit holder to commercial fish in the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area with one gillnet per limited entry permit held.
- Allow a Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission limited entry permit holder to commercial fish in the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area with one set gillnet per limited entry permit held.
- Allow holders of two Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission set gillnet limited entry permits to fish two set gillnets in the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area.
- Remove restrictions on the amount of drift or set gillnet gear a vessel may have on board within the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area.
- Require all nets, buoys, ropes and anchoring devices to be removed from the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area when this area is closed to commercial fishing.
- Define the boundary that separates set gillnet from drift gillnet gear in the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area (KRSHA), and define the outside boundaries of the KRSHA.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE-GROUP 4: Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan (14 Proposals – Chair: Cain)

Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan (14 Proposals)

- Repeal and readopt provisions (a)–(f) of the management plan and add provisions to manage the drift gillnet fishery to harvest surplus sockeye, pink, and chum salmon production and achieve escapement goals.
- Amend provisions (a)–(f) of the management plan and add language to manage the commercial drift gillnet fishery based on the inseason abundance to meet escapement goals and harvest surplus salmon.
- Repeal and readopt *Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan* with the amended plan removing mandatory time and area restrictions from July 1–August 15.
- Amend *Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan* to maximize commercial harvest of sockeye salmon.
- Remove restrictions to the commercial drift gillnet fishery, so that the fishery would occur during two inlet-wide fishing periods based on test fishery and escapement data.
- Remove restrictions on the commercial drift gillnet fishery from July 1–31 and manage the drift gillnet fishery based on inseason salmon abundance.
- Remove area restrictions imposed on the commercial drift gillnet fishery during July 9–15 and 16–31 time periods.
- Restrict commercial drift gillnet fishery to the Expanded Corridor and Drift Gillnet Area 1 from August 1–15.
- Amend preamble of management plan and restrict commercial drift gillnet fishery to the Expanded Corridor and Drift Gillnet Area 1 from August 1–15.
- 95 Restrict commercial drift gillnet fishery to the Expanded Corridors and Drift Gillnet Area 1 from August 1–15.



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- Remove the one-percent rule, as referenced to both the set and drift gillnet fisheries, from the drift gillnet management plan.
- Property Repeal the drift and set gillnet one-percent rules that apply from August 1–15.
- Allow commercial fishing with drift gillnets in all waters of the Central District, except the Kenai and Kasilof Sections, from August 16 until closed by emergency order.
- 98 Reduce sport fishery bag limit for coho salmon on the west side of Cook Inlet and close drift gillnet fishing in Areas 3 and 4 for remainder of season if coho salmon sport fishing is restricted or closed in the Little Susitna River.

COMMITTEE-GROUP A: Cook Inlet Areawide and Northern Cook Inlet Sport Fisheries (18 Proposals – Chair: Morisky, Jeffrey, Payton)

Cook Inlet - Areawide Sport Fisheries (5 Proposals)

- Allow snagging for sockeye salmon in all Cook Inlet freshwater lakes (*This proposal will be considered at the UCI and LCI meetings*).
- Allow party fishing in Cook Inlet fresh and salt water for all species except king salmon (*This proposal will be considered at the UCI and LCI meetings*).
- Require that when proxy fishing in Upper Cook Inlet, once a bag limit is taken the next legal bag limit caught must be retained.
- Allow only barbless hooks in Upper Cook Inlet flowing waters closed to salmon fishing.
- Require the use of circle hooks when fishing for sockeye salmon.

Knik River, Anchorage Area (13 Proposals)

- 233 Extend the area closed to sport fishing downstream of the Little Susitna weir.
- Reduce the bag limits for salmon, other than king salmon, and prohibit releasing coho salmon.
- Modify the Fish Creek personal use fishery to accommodate a new Sustainable Escapement Goal (SEG) range.
- Increase the hours open to fishing in Fish Creek.
- Increase the hours open to fishing on Cottonwood Creek.
- Increase the hours open to fishing in the Wasilla Creek / Rabbit Slough drainage.
- Open waters in a closed area on Wasilla Creek within 300 feet of Palmer Fishhook Road to sport fishing.
- Restrict hours and dates open to fishing on Jim Creek.
- Amend the regulations for the Anchorage Bowl Drainages to allow harvest of salmon, other than king salmon, that are less than 16 inches in length.
- Add Lower Sixmile Lake to the list of stocked lakes.
- Close all fishing on a portion of Campbell Creek when that portion is not open to coho salmon fishing.
- 239 Create a youth-only fishery on Ship Creek.
- 241 Extend the area closed to sport fishing on Ship Creek.



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COMMITTEE-GROUP B: Fishing Districts and Gillnet Specifications and Operations, Pink Salmon Management Plan, Upper Cook Inlet Management Plan, West Cook Inlet Salmon, Cook Inlet Smelt (14 Proposals – Chair: Huntington, Ruffner, Cain)

Fishing Districts and Gillnet Specifications and Operations (4 Proposal)

- 84 Clarify closed waters around the Kenai and Kasilof Rivers.
- Define commercial fishing statistical areas in the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery.
- Move the southwestern-most point of the Expanded Kasilof Section 1.2 nm west so it aligns with the northwestern-most point of the Expanded Anchor Point Section.
- Allow a single person holding two Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission Cook Inlet drift gillnet limited entry permits to operate 200 fathoms of drift gillnet gear.

Pink Salmon Management Plan (4 Proposals)

- Repeal and readopt the management plan to allow for the commercial harvest of surplus pink salmon in the Upper Subdistrict with set and drift gillnet gear.
- Amend the *Cook Inlet Pink Salmon Management Plan* to remove or lower the daily harvest triggers.
- Remove mesh size restrictions on set and drift gillnet gear in the commercial pink salmon fishery.
- Increase maximum mesh size for set gillnets to 5-inches and expand the fishing season to August 6–15 in the commercial pink salmon fishery.

Upper Cook Inlet Management Plan (4 Proposals)

- 127 Remove inriver goals from the list of escapement goals in the *Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plan* and realign inriver and escapement goals in the *Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan*.
- Amend plan to prioritize the need to harvest all surplus salmon stocks and to maximize economic yield and the overall benefits from salmon stocks managed under the plan.
- Amend plan to prioritize the need to harvest all surplus salmon stocks and to maximize economic yield and the overall benefits from salmon stocks managed under the plan.
- Amend *Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plan* so that fishery restrictions on fully allocated stocks of concern are shared among all user groups in proportion to the respective user group harvest of that stock.

West Cook Inlet Salmon (1 Proposal)

142 Close waters within one statute mile of the terminus of Kustatan, Drift, and Big rivers, and Bachatna Creek; as measured from mean lower low water, to commercial fishing.

Cook Inlet Smelt (1 Proposal)

Increase the amount of smelt that may be taken in the Cook Inlet commercial smelt fishery from 100 tons to 200 tons annually.



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COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE-GROUP 5: Kenai and Kasilof River King Salmon Sport Fisheries, Vessel and Habitat Restrictions, and Guides (21 Proposals – Chair Ruffner)

Kenai River King Salmon (13 Proposals)

- 149 Revise Kenai River and Kasilof River Early-run King Salmon Management Plan.
- Rewrite the *Kenai River and Kasilof River Early-run King Salmon Management Plan* to redefine early-run stocks and establish age- and sex-based escapement goals.
- Start the Kenai River early-run king salmon fishery as an unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure, no retention fishery.
- 150 Start the Kenai River king salmon sport fisheries as single-hook, no bait, non-retention.
- Prohibit fishing for king salmon from markers 300 yards below Slikok Creek upstream to Skilak Lake.
- Expand the waters of the Kenai River closed to fishing for king salmon.
- Expand the waters of the Kenai River closed to fishing for king salmon.
- Replace slot limit for Kenai River king salmon with maximum size limit to prohibit retention of king salmon greater than 42 inches in length.
- Extend the time that the slot limit for Kenai River king salmon is in effect.
- Modify the annual limit of king salmon from the Kenai River to two fish, only one taken prior to July 1.
- Modify the annual limit of two king salmon for the Kenai River to include only one large fish.
- Repeal barbless hook provisions in Lower Kenai River.
- Expand the dates to prohibit back trolling and tie to prohibition of bait.

Kenai River Vessels and Habitat Restrictions (4 Proposals)

- 178 Increase the number of days only non-motorized vessels may fish on the lower Kenai River.
- Add Thursdays as a day only non-motorized vessels may fish on the Kenai River downstream of Cunningham Park.
- 180 Establish two Kenai River riparian habitat areas equal to approximately nine-tenths of a mile that will be closed to fishing from shore within 10 feet of the waterline from July 1 August 15.
- Only non-motorized vessels may be used when fishing on the Kenai River.

Guides - Kenai and Kasilof Rivers (4 Proposals)

- Prohibit all guiding from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m.
- Allow guided anglers to fish on Mondays in August.
- Modify language referencing fishing from guide boats on the Kenai River to include all guided fishing.
- 184 Relax guiding restrictions when king salmon fishing is closed by emergency order.



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COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE-GROUP 6: Kenai, Kasilof and Russian River-Sport and Personal Use (23 Proposals – Chair: Jensen)

Kenai, Kasilof, and Russian Rivers (9 Proposals)

- Only barbless hooks allowed in Kenai River upstream of the Lower Killey River.
- Allow only barbless, unbaited, single-hook gear on the Kenai River from January 1 August 1.
- Allow only one single-hook or one single-hook lure.
- Allow fishing from shore after harvesting a bag limit of coho salmon.
- Expand the waters open to fishing after harvesting a bag limit of coho salmon in the lower Kenai River.
- 191 Increase Kenai River coho salmon bag limit from two fish to three.
- 192 Shorten the Kenai River coho season by closing October 31.
- 193 Create an archery fishery for sockeye salmon in a section of the Russian River.
- 194 Create a size limit for lake trout on Hidden Lake.

Kenai River Personal Use (13 Proposals)

- Remove the commissioner's emergency order authority to extend the Kenai River personal use fishery hours.
- 196 Prohibit dip nets from being attached to a vessel.
- 197 Prohibit dipnetting from a vessel that is not anchored in the Kenai and Kasilof river personal use fisheries.
- 198 Prohibit webbing in personal use dip nets that exceeds 2.5 inch stretched measure.
- Prohibit dipnetting on the Kasilof River from a vessel with a motor on board greater than 10 horsepower.
- Amend the number of king salmon that may be retained in the Upper Cook Inlet personal use fishery to 10 king salmon under 20 inches.
- Amend the area open to dipnetting from shore in the Kenai River personal use dip net fishery.
- 202 Extend the Cook Inlet personal use dip net fisheries to the 2nd Sunday of August.
- Extend the season and liberalize the bag limit in the Kenai River personal use fishery when the sonar estimate is projected to exceed 1.2 million sockeye salmon.
- Extend the boundary of the Kenai River personal use dip net boat fishery upstream to Cunningham Park.
- Allow shore based personal use dipnetting in the Kenai River upstream to Skilak Lake.
- 206 Create an area upstream of the Kenai River personal use fishery where recording and fin clip requirements are waived for fish that have not been off loaded.
- Amend the boundary description language for the area open to dipnetting in the Kasilof River personal use salmon fishery.

Cook Inlet Personal Use (1 Proposal)

Allow 10 Dolly Varden/Arctic char per household in Cook Inlet Personal Use Fisheries.



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COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE-GROUP 7: Northern District Commercial and Susitna River Sport Fisheries (20 Proposals – Chair: Jeffrey)

Northern District Commercial Salmon (10 Proposals)

- 209 Repeal the Northern District King Salmon Management Plan.
- Close the Northern District commercial set gillnet fishery until the first regular period after June 24, if the Susitna River sport fishery is restricted by emergency order.
- Repeal and readopt management plan to fully utilize surplus salmon stocks based on the abundance of salmon returning to the Northern District.
- 212 Close the commercial set gillnet fishery in the Northern District on August 15.
- Close commercial fishing within one mile of Little Susitna River when the Little Susitna River sport fishery is restricted to no bait.
- Close commercial fishing within one mile of the Little Susitna River when more than half of Northern District streams with king salmon escapement goals are closed to sport harvest of king salmon or when the Little Susitna River sport fishery is restricted by emergency order.
- Close commercial fishing within one mile of the Little Susitna River, if the Little Susitna River king salmon sport fishery is restricted to harvest less than 7 days per week and artificial lures by emergency order.
- 216 Close waters within one-statute mile of the Little Susitna River to commercial fishing.
- Remove the Eastern Subdistrict of the Northern District from commercial set gillnet restrictions that apply July 20–August 6.
- Allow a holder of more than one Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission set gillnet limited entry permit to fish with one set gillnet per permit held in the Northern District.

Susitna River Sport Fisheries (10 Proposals)

- 230 Create a Deshka River King Salmon Management Plan.
- 231 Create a Susitna River King Salmon Management Plan.
- Allow an unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure, no retention fishery on resident species when waters of Montana Creek are closed to fishing for king salmon.
- 221 Prohibit harvest of king salmon in units 2, 3, 5 and 6, except Willow Creek.
- 223 Prohibit king salmon fishing in Unit 2 if no retention is allowed.
- 220 Establish sport fishery closure times in the Larsen Creek drainage.
- 222 Prohibit fishing for king, sockeye, and coho salmon in the Larson Creek drainage.
- 226 Create a bag limit of one hatchery king salmon in the Susitna River drainage.
- Allow harvest of hatchery king salmon when emergency orders restrict the sport fishery.
- Reduce the maximum legal size for rainbow trout in Byers Creek from 20 to 16 inches.



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COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE-GROUP 8: Regulatory Alignment (13 Proposals – Chair: Payton)

Sport Fishing (13 Proposals)

- Align size restrictions for Dolly Varden and rainbow trout bag limit in the flowing waters of the Kenai River Drainage Area.
- Amend general provisions for lakes and ponds of the Kenai River drainage to restore winter ice fisheries for landlocked coho salmon less than 16 inches in length.
- Align the Swanson River rainbow trout spawning closure with the proposed Kenai River drainage rainbow trout spawning closure start date.
- Align the Kenai River king salmon sanctuaries start date, and boat closures with the proposed rainbow trout spawning closure start date.
- Align dates anglers are prohibited from fishing from boats with rainbow trout closure.
- Align the Kenai River tributary fishing closure start dates with the proposed king salmon sanctuaries and rainbow trout spawning closure start dates, and align all Kenai River tributary closures so they have similar closure periods.
- Align the Kenai River tributary fishing closure start dates with the proposed king salmon sanctuaries and rainbow trout spawning closure start dates, and align all Kenai River tributary closures so they have similar fishing seasons, such that anglers are prohibited from fishing for salmon.
- Align the closure start date for all the tributaries of the Upper Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area with the start dates proposed for the king salmon sanctuaries and the start dates proposed for the rainbow trout spawning closure. In addition, create the same fishing season in all the tributaries of the Upper Section of the Kenai River Drainage area.
- 79 Change the Kenai River king salmon sanctuaries and the Moose-Kenai rivers confluence area fly-fishing-only waters to artificial fly waters, and align dates for these special provisions with other provisions.
- Align gear restrictions for Kenai River tributaries.
- Create consistent rainbow/steelhead trout regulations in the Kasilof River above and below the Sterling Highway Bridge and amend the open season date for Tustumena Lake tributaries to protect spawning rainbow/steelhead trout.
- 82 Amend Kasilof River early-run king salmon possession requirements.
- Repeal gear regulations for northern pike.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE-GROUP 9: Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Plan (1 Proposal – Chair: Jensen)

Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Plan (1 Proposal)

279 Clarify when 4-inch mesh set gillnets may be used during the early season king salmon subsistence fishery closure.