

**PROPOSAL 18**

**5 AAC 77.591. Copper River Personal Use Dip Net Salmon Fishery Management Plan.**

Repeal the reduction in maximum harvest level in the Chitina Subdistrict Personal Use fishery when the Copper River commercial fishery is closed 13 or more consecutive days, as follows:

**(f) The maximum harvest level for the Chitina Subdistrict personal use salmon fishery is 100,000 - 150,000 salmon, not including any salmon in excess of the in-river goal or salmon taken after August 31. [IF THE COPPER RIVER DISTRICT COMMERCIAL SALMON FISHERY IS CLOSED FOR 13 OR MORE CONSECUTIVE DAYS, THE MAXIMUM HARVEST LEVEL IN THE CHITINA SUB DISTRICT IS REDUCED TO 50,000 SALMON]**

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Repeal the language in 5 AAC 77.591 (f) “ If the Copper River District commercial salmon fishery is closed for 13 or more consecutive days, the maximum harvest level in the Chitina Subdistrict is reduced to 50,000 salmon for the remainder of the season.”

The Chitina Personal Use Dip Net Salmon Fishery (CPUDF) has fishing periods determined by a pre-season schedule established by the commissioner using projected daily counts of salmon passing the Miles Lake sonar counter. This schedule is meant to distribute the harvest throughout the season. Adjustments shall be made to the preseason schedule based on actual sonar counts compared to projected counts. If the actual sonar count at Miles Lake is more than the projected sonar count, the commissioner shall close, by emergency order, the se ason and immediately reopen it during which additional fishing times will be allowed. If the actual sonar count at Miles Lake is less than the projected sonar count, the commissioner shall close, by emergency order, the season and immediately reopen it during which fishing times will be reduced by a corresponding amount of time.

As stated above, if the salmon run numbers are low triggering closures in the commercial fishery, this will also be reflected in the salmon sonar counts at Miles Lake and the commissioner will also by emergency order, close or reduce dipnetting openings.

The CPUDF has an allocation of 100,000- 150,000 salmon. There is no justification to reduce the dipnet fishery allocation to 50,000 because of commercial fishery closures especially when the reduction would be for the rest of the dipnet season even though salmon numbers may within a week or so rebound. This is especially true now that commercial fishing openers will be restricted in the first half of the Copper River commercial fishing season because of recent years low king salmon numbers returning to the Copper River, increasing the likelihood of triggering a CPUDF allocation reduction and severely reducing the harvest of sockeye salmon in the dip net fishery.

**PROPOSED BY:** The Chitina Dipnetters Association and Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee (EF-F17-020)

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