

tickets. Log sheets are to be completed for each fishing trip and therefore correspond with a fish ticket(s). In December 2016, new regulations were adopted by the board regarding the submission of log sheets from the Cook Inlet Area sablefish fishery (5 AAC 28.360 (b)) and the submission deadline was aligned with the fish ticket deadline. Amending Prince William Sound Area (PWS) sablefish regulations would provide consistency between areas in Central Region. Fish tickets are due within seven days after delivery of fish and fishermen delivering to a processor will often submit log sheet(s) to industry staff when completing the fish ticket and the buyer will submit the log sheet with the corresponding fish ticket(s) to the department. This practice works well for timely receipt of log sheets, which is necessary for corroboration of harvest and effort data, and monitoring the fishery inseason. It is specified in regulation that fish tickets are due to the department within seven days of landing (5 AAC 39.130 (c)). However, it is still the fisherman's responsibility to submit the log sheet and, for those fishermen that do not submit their log sheets to a buyer, the deadline for submission of log sheets to the department needs to be specified in regulation. Additionally, management of PWS groundfish fisheries is now occurring from the Homer office and specifying the office location is unnecessary and could be inaccurate; contact information is provided to fishermen at the time of registration.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F17-099)

PROPOSAL 10

5 AAC 24.360. Copper River District Salmon Management Plan.

Set an optimal escapement goal for Copper River sockeye salmon, as follows:

Set an OEG of 700,000-1,200,000 for Copper River Sockeye matching the late run Kenai Sockeye OEG. The Copper River is a much longer drainage with more spawning and rearing habitat than the Kenai. The current SEG of 360,000-750,000 is artificially low but is cited by the commercial fish managers as the primary justification for continuing to exploit King Salmon. Over escapement of sockeye has never been a true biological concern on the Copper River and should not be cited as an excuse to harvest Kings.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Having no OEG for Sockeye causes managers to exploit Kings under the excuse of trying to avoid exceeding the sockeye SEG.

PROPOSED BY: Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F17-045)

PROPOSAL 11

5 AAC 01.647. Copper River Subsistence Salmon Fisheries Management Plans.

Remove the requirement to open the Batzulnetas subsistence fishery by emergency order, as follows:

5 AAC 01.647(i)(5) is amended to read:

(5) salmon may be taken only from June 1 through September 1 or until the season is closed by emergency order; fishing periods are **from 12:00 noon Friday through 12:00 noon Sunday from June 1 through June 30 and from 12:00 noon Friday through 11:59 p.m. Monday from July 1**

through September 1 [TO BE ESTABLISHED BY EMERGENCY ORDER AND ARE TWO DAYS PER WEEK DURING THE MONTH OF JUNE AND 3.5 DAYS PER WEEK FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE SEASON];

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? When this regulation was originally adopted the department was concerned that the Tanada Creek sockeye salmon return could be overexploited by a targeted subsistence fishery in this area. However, no more than five permits (either federal or state) have been issued in a single year since this fishery was established. The fishery is dual managed under state and federal subsistence regulations. Under federal regulations the fishery is open 24 hours per day, seven days per week from May 15 through September 30. No state subsistence permits have been issued since 2002. The federal fishery had a maximum harvest of 867 sockeye salmon in 2013 with an average harvest of 219 sockeye salmon from 2011–2015. Average passage at a fish weir on Tanada Creek operated by the National Park Service was 23,736 sockeye salmon from 2011–2015.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F17-129)

PROPOSAL 12

5 AAC 01.620. Lawful gear and gear specifications.

Require operators of fish wheels without live boxes to be present when fishing in the Glennallen Subdistrict subsistence fishery, as follows:

(c) All fishwheels are to have a live box so that the king salmon can be put back in to the river to spawn. I know of people who don't like Kings and don't have a live box so they just throw the dead Kings back into the river. Also some people claim the fish should die quickly and not suffer as in a live box. So I'm proposing everyone who doesn't have a live box will have to have someone at the fishwheel at all times from the start of the season until the middle of July when the main run of King Salmon go through so they can throw the Kings back into the river.

It will greatly improve the resource as their numbers of spanning King would increase.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Declining numbers of king salmon in the Copper River Basin.

What will happen if this problem is not solved? The numbers of King Salmon will keep declining and they are already at a dangerous low level.

Everyone who likes King Salmon would benefit. The only people who would likely suffer would be the ones who are too lazy to build a live box and that's why I mentioned someone right at the fishwheel to throw the Kings back into the river.

PROPOSED BY: James Marchini (HQ-F17-008)

PROPOSAL 13

5 AAC 01.620. Lawful gear and gear specifications.

Prohibit using a dip net from a boat to harvest salmon in the Glennallen Subdistrict, as follows:

(b)(5) It is unlawful to harvest salmon using a dip net from a boat in the Glennallen Subdistrict.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Harvesting salmon with a dip from a boat in the Glennallen Subdistrict, individuals are dip netting from a boat targeting schools of salmon. When they find a school of fish they take their limit within a short limit of time, not allowing for escapement. Subsistence fishermen are catching salmon away from the shoreline of the Copper River, salmon rest in holes away from the shoreline in high water and are susceptible to being easily caught in dip nets from boats using electronics. Once a holding hole is located, a boat with electronics makes multiple passes until the fish are cleaned out. When the water drops, there are no fish left to continue to the spawning beds. The Copper River Red Salmon escapement goal return was not at its' normal return, it was below the normal run. King Salmon spawning escapement in 2016 was only 50% of the sustainable escapement goal. If this keeps up, our Chinook stocks will be depleted in a very short time. Fishing from a boat with dip nets may be the reason for low return of Reds and King Salmon.

Fishing from a boat is not a customary and traditional method and means to harvest fish. This new method is causing unintended overharvest and allocation issues that must be addressed. In 2015 the subsistence dip net gear type caught more kings than fish wheel gear type. This is primarily an increase in efficiency using boats as a dip net platform to increase efficiency with growing non-historical participation using this gear type. Fish wheels, ice fishing, and dip nets with platforms are customary and traditional methods of harvesting fish. Ahtna People did not use boats to fish from, they fished for salmon with a dip net while standing on a platform. Boats were used to travel from one place to another place.

PROPOSED BY: Ahtna Tene Nene' Customary and Traditional Use Committee (HQ-F17-022)

PROPOSAL 14

5 AAC 24.361. Copper River King Salmon Management Plan.

Modify the season dates for the Glennallen Subdistrict subsistence salmon fishery based on the preseason king salmon harvest projection, as follows:

(e) In the Glennallen Subdistrict subsistence salmon fishery, **if the department preseason forecast of the Copper River king salmon run estimates a maximum harvest by all fisheries to be less than 10,000 king salmon, then the commissioner shall, by emergency order, delay the start of the season by one week, to be from June 8 through September 30.** If [if] the commissioner determines that additional conservation measures are necessary to achieve the escapement goals, the commissioner may, by emergency order, close the Glennallen Subdistrict subsistence salmon fishery season and immediately reopen a season during which any one or a combination of the following restrictions may be implemented to reduce king salmon harvest in the Glennallen Subdistrict subsistence salmon fishery, in the following priority order:

- (1) a bag limit is established for king salmon taken by fish wheel;
- (2) the bag limit for king salmon taken by fish wheel and dip net is reduced;
- (3) the retention of king salmon taken by fish wheel and dip net is prohibited;
- (4) modify methods and means for fish wheels and dip nets.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Recent declines in the Copper River Chinook salmon run have occurred in which the sustainable escapement goal (SEG) has not been consistently met (including years 2010, 2014, and 2016). Existing regulations and salmon management plans for Copper River Chinook salmon could be improved to provide more specific guidance to State managers for their decisions on management actions which may assist with achieving the established SEG.

As an example of management planning for a low return year, for 2017 the State released a preliminary forecast of the Copper River Chinook salmon run to be 29,000 fish. The established SEG is 24,000 Chinook salmon; this left a forecast harvestable surplus of only 5,000 Chinook salmon for all combined fisheries. Included in the State forecast was a maximum projected commercial harvest of 3,500 Chinook salmon. This commercial harvest projection implies an apparent management plan of providing only 1,500 Chinook salmon available for harvest in all other fisheries; when in recent years, the average up river subsistence harvest alone is roughly 2,500. To assure the long term health of Copper River Chinook salmon stocks, prudent management of all combined fisheries affecting this run should attempt to keep the harvest within the limit which is forecast to be surplus to the SEG, at least until inseason run strength indicators may suggest otherwise.

In the Upper Copper River subsistence fisheries, the ratio of Chinook salmon to sockeye salmon in the harvest is higher in the early season than in the latter part of the season. Delaying the start date of the season would allow additional Chinook salmon to migrate to their spawning grounds at times when a conservation concern exists. This proposal is intended to be a management tool for stocks of concern and provides clear direction to the State for this management action in the subsistence fishery of the Glennallen Subdistrict.

PROPOSED BY: Wrangell-St.Elias National Park Service Subsistence Resource Commission
(EF-F17-050)

PROPOSAL 15

5 AAC 01.620. Lawful gear and gear specifications and 5 AAC 77.591. Copper River Personal Use Dip Net Salmon Fishery Management Plan.

Prohibit the use of monofilament or gillnet mesh in dip nets, as follows:

Prohibit the use of monofilament or gill net mesh material in dip nets used in the subsistence and personal use fisheries of the Upper Copper River District.

Subsistence Finfish Fishery.

5 AAC 01.620. Lawful gear and gear specifications.

- (1) In the Glennallen Subdistrict by fish wheel or dip nets;

...

(7) the use of dip nets constructed of monofilament or gill net mesh material is prohibited.

Personal Use Fishery.

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

...

(c) Salmon may be taken only by dip nets. The use of dip nets constructed of monofilament or gill net mesh material is prohibited.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The use of monofilament or gill net mesh material in dip nets entangles the fish, makes it more difficult to release, and causes an increased level of harm to Chinook salmon intended for release. Being able to release Chinook salmon unharmed is particularly a concern when Chinook salmon abundance is low.

PROPOSED BY: Wrangell-St.Elias National Park Subsistence Resource Commission

(EF-F17-051)

PROPOSAL 16

5 AAC 01.xxx. New Section and 5 AAC 77.xxx. New Section.

Require log books for all charters operating in personal use and subsistence fisheries, as follows:

A vessel for hire should keep a logbook recording the number of customers, the methods by which they fished, and the total number of each species caught.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Alaska Department of Fish & Game (department) is unable to accurately track trends and catch rates when charter boats are hired to assist individuals engaging in subsistence and personal use fisheries. Much like the history of sport charter operations and the department’s response via logbook requirements in fresh and saltwater areas, this recent commercialization of subsistence and personal use fisheries must be fully and accurately documented.

PROPOSED BY: Cordova District Fishermen United Board of Directors

(HQ-F17-033)

PROPOSAL 17

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

Extend the lower boundary of the Chitina Subdistrict downstream to the Uranatina River, as follows:

(h) For the purposes of this section, the Chitina Subdistrict consists of all waters of the mainstream Copper River from the downstream edge of the Chitina- McCarthy Bridge downstream to an north/south line beginning at the mouth of the Uranatina River and crossing the Copper River as designated by ADF&G regulatory markers.

[TO AN EAST-WEST LINE CROSSING THE COPPER RIVER AS DESIGNATED BY ADF&G REGULATORY MARKERS LOCATED APPROXIMATELY 200 YDS UPSTREAM OF HALEY CREEK]

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Currently in regulation the CPUDF boundary consists of all mainstream waters of the Copper River from the downstream edge of the Chitina McCarthy Bridge downstream to an east west line crossing the Copper River approximately 200yds upstream of Haley Creek a length of about 8.1 miles. Extending the lower boundary to the Uranatina River Mouth would add about nine miles to the length of the CPUDF. This added stretch of river is a braided area below the confined turbulent waters of Woods Canyon and would offer an area safer for dipnetting, help spread out the users of the fishery, and open up a stretch of river that would be more conducive to dipnetting out of a boat which has increased in recent years. All users of the fishery would still have to return to O'Brien Creek or the McCarthy Bridge boat launch as they do now thus not increasing the burden on F&G enforcement.

PROPOSED BY: The Chitina Dipnetters Association (EF-F17-019)

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 pre-season 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