



Division of Sport Fish

REGULATORY SIMPLICITY: *MAKING IT EASIER TO FISH*

A presentation to the Alaska Board of Fisheries on October 17, 2017

Ryan Ragan, Program Coordinator - Division of Sport Fish

RC 17

Angler Profile

2

- Fishes multiple locations
- Targets more than one species of fish
- The reasons why people fish vary.
- Wants to remain in compliance with the law.



More About Our Anglers

3

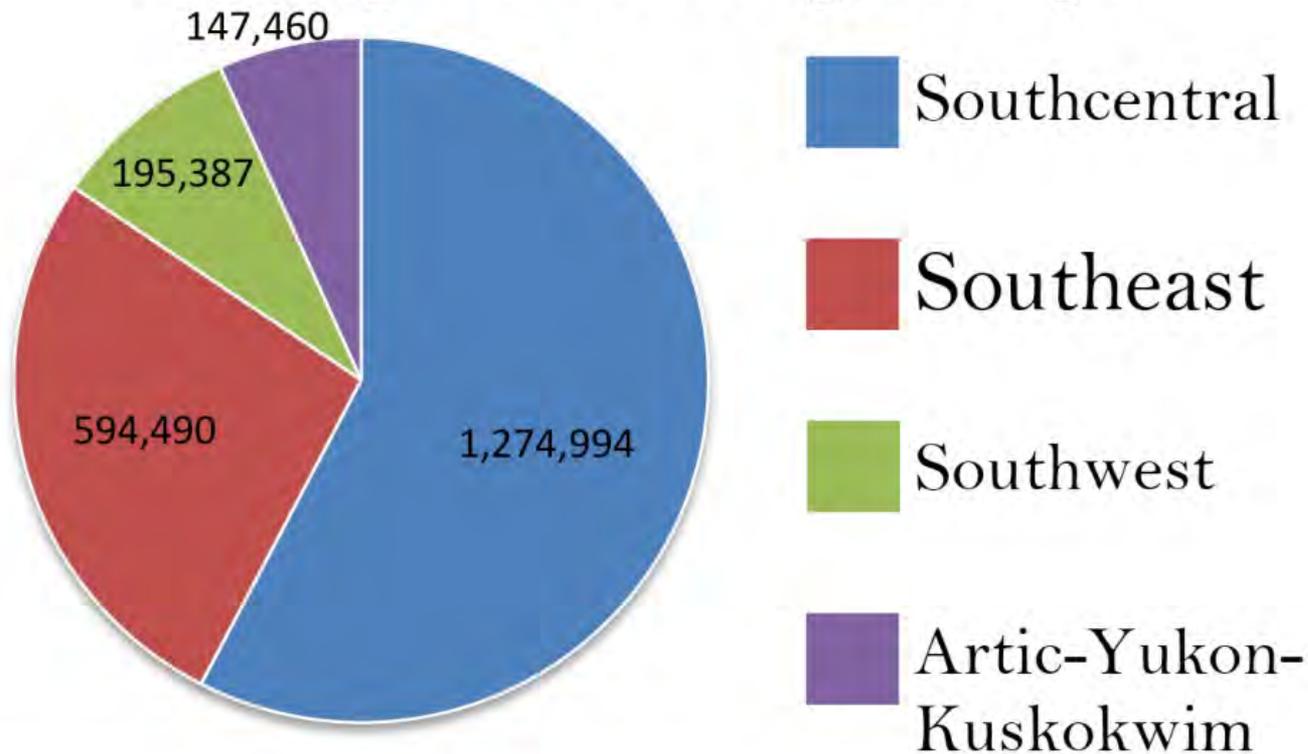
- ~500,000 anglers fish in Alaska each year.
 - Resident and non-resident anglers
 - ✦ Fish road accessible and remote areas



Angler Days by Region (2015)

4

2015 Sport Fish Angler Days



Over 500,000 anglers

Over 13 million days fished

Angling Days

5

- Kenai Peninsula Freshwater:
 - ✦ **562,231 angler days**
 - ✦ Kenai River – *Probably the most heavily fished; Probably the single most regulated water in the state.*
- Yukon River Drainage:
 - ✦ **8,230 angler days**

Complex Regulations - *What anglers have to say*

6

Comments from the 2015 Statewide Harvest Survey

“There are so many regulations that I feel I should retain legal representation prior to making my first cast.”

“Please keep regulations simple. As I get older and my grandkids get older I want to be able to fish with my grandkids knowing I am legal.”

“The regulations are overly restrictive and unnecessarily complex. ... I have made over a dozen trips in the past years. I don't think I'll be making any more.”

Complex Regulations - *What anglers have to say*

7

“The time spent fishing was fun, even though we didn’t catch any fish. The rules, however, are very confusing. I spent a lot of time wondering if I was doing something wrong (illegal). You have to simplify your book ... A guy shouldn’t have to be a lawyer to go fishing. I would have tried more fishing spots but I wasn’t clear on the rules.”

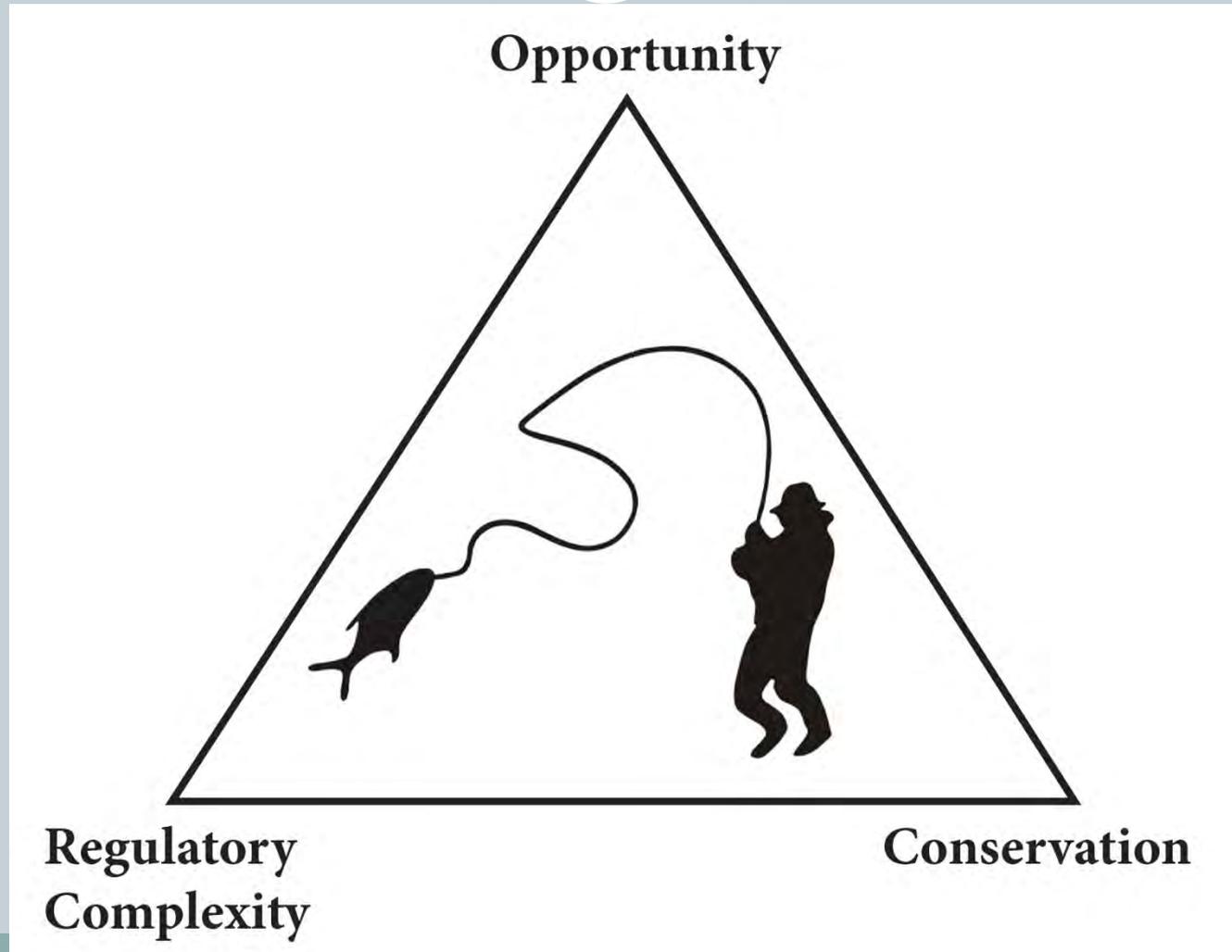
How Complex Regulations Affect Anglers

8

- Keep people from feeling comfortable while fishing. Or prevent people from fishing all together.
- Can lead to citations.
- Increase inquiries to ADF&G staff.
- Leads people to seek answers from fellow anglers.

Why Regulations Can Be Complex

9



Challenges to Understanding Regulations

10

3 Criteria that Create Complexity

1. **Number of regulations.**
2. **Language (terminology)**
3. **Variability**

The Division of Sport Fish is faced with the challenge of reducing regulatory complexity – this directly involves the Board of Fisheries.

Overall Number of Regulations

11

“I found it difficult to enjoy fishing because of all the rules.”

- Comment from 2015 Statewide Harvest Survey

Overall Number of Regulations

12

Southcentral Alaska Sport Fishing Regulations Summary

2017

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

Effective until the 2018 Summary is issued Sport Fish at: www.adfg.alaska.gov/

[Outstanding Regional Regulations](#)
[Personal Use Fisheries](#)
[West Coast Inlet](#)
[Susitna River Drainage](#)
[Knik Arm](#)
[Anchorage Bowl](#)
[Kenai River Drainage](#)
[Kenai Peninsula](#)
[Cook Inlet Salt Waters](#)
[North Gulf Coast](#)
[Prince William Sound](#)

Susitna Drainage:
18 pages

100+ waters with Special Regulations

Upper Copper/ Upper Susitna Drainage:
6 pages

80+ waters with Special Regulations

Northern Alaska Sport Fishing Regulations Summary

2017

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

Effective until the 2018 Summary is issued Sport Fish at: www.adfg.alaska.gov/

[Outstanding Regional Regulations](#)
[Waskvich Goodwin Drainages](#)
[North Slope Drainages](#)
[Northwestern Drainages](#)
[Yukon River Drainage](#)
[Tanana River Drainage](#)
[Upper Copper/ Upper Susitna Drainages](#)

• Northern: 48 pages.

Southeast Alaska Sport Fishing Regulations Summary

2017

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

Effective until the 2018 Summary is issued Sport Fish at: www.adfg.alaska.gov/

[Outstanding Regional Regulations](#)
[Yakutat](#)
[Haines & Skagway](#)
[Juneau & Glacier Bay](#)
[Sitka](#)
[Peterburg & Wrangell](#)
[Prince of Wales Island](#)
[Ketchikan](#)

Juneau/ Glacier Bay Area:
4 pages

150+ waters with Special Regulations

Bristol Bay fresh waters:
10 pages

70+ waters with Special Regulations

Southwest Alaska Sport Fishing Regulations Summary

2017

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

Effective until the 2018 Summary is issued Sport Fish at: www.adfg.alaska.gov/

[Outstanding Regional Regulations](#)
[Bristol Bay Salt and Fresh Waters](#)
[Alaska Peninsula & Aleutian Islands Fresh Waters](#)
[Alaska Peninsula, Aleutian Islands & Kodiak Island Salt Waters](#)
[Kodiak Island Fresh Waters](#)

• Southwest: 40 pages.

• Southcentral: 96 pages.

• Southeast: 48 pages.

Emergency Orders - Issued in 2016

13

- 24 in Southeast
- 11 in AYK
- 41 in Southcentral
 - ✦ *In 2015, 59 EOs were issued in Southcentral*
 - ✦ *Currently at 40 (2017)*

The screenshot shows the Alaska Department of Fish and Game website. The main heading is "Emergency Orders and News Releases - Southcentral Sport Fishing". Below this is a table with four columns: Date, Area, Summary, and Action. The table lists various fishing-related events and orders throughout 2016, including harvest surveys, school district egg takes, season closures, and liberalizations.

Date	Area	Summary	Action
10/13/16	Statewide	Fish And Game To Begin Mailing Annual Sport Fishing Harvest Survey	
09/28/16	Northern Kenai	Kenai Peninsula Borough School District Classroom Salmon Egg Takes Scheduled For October 5-6	
09/15/16	Prince William Sound	Prince William Sound SPORT, SUBSISTENCE, And Personal Use Shrimp Season Closes September 15	
09/13/16	Kodiak	Buskin River Drainage Closed To Sport Fishing For Coho	Closure
08/18/16	Mat-Su	Jim Creek Drainage Closed To All Salmon Fishing On SATURDAY, August 20	Closure
08/18/16	Mat-Su	Youth-only Coho Salmon Fishing Day At The Eklutna TAJI RACE, SATURDAY, August 20	
08/10/16	Mat-Su	FISH, COTTONWOOD, And Wasilla Creeks Coho Salmon Sport Fishing Limits And Days Liberalized	Liberalization
08/09/16	Mat-Su	Retention Of Sockeye Salmon Prohibited In Larson Creek Drainage	Closure
08/04/16	Mat-Su	Little Susitna River Remains No Bait	Restriction
08/01/16	Southern Kenai	Youth-only Fishing Day At The Homer SPIT, SATURDAY, August 6	
08/01/16	Mat-Su	Fish Creek Youth-only Sport Fishery Opens Saturday And SUNDAY, August 6-7	
07/21/16	Northern Kenai	Kenai River Sockeye Bag And Possession Limits To INCREASE; Pu Fishery Opens To 24 Hours	Liberalization

Terminology

14

“The rules and regs for fishing are extremely complicated. I suggest you simplify all of the verbiage so it would be easier for regular folks to understand.”

– Comment from 2015 Statewide Harvest Survey

(Terminology) “Fly-Fishing Only” vs. “Water where only flies may be used”

15

Waters where only flies may be used:

Terminology is more easily understood.

In waters where only flies may be used, sport fishing is permitted by the use of one “artificial fly.”

“artificial fly” means a fly that is constructed by common methods known as fly tying, including a dry fly, wet fly, and nymph and that is free of bait ...”

Fly-Fishing-Only waters:

Common question: **Do I have to use a fly rod?”**

In waters designated as fly-fishing-only waters, sport fishing is permitted as follows:

Not more than one unweighted, single hook fly with gap between point and shank three-eighths inch or less;

Weights may be used 18 inches or more ahead of the fly.

(Terminology) Artificial Lure vs. Artificial Fly

16

“Artificial lure” means a lure that is man-made, free of bait and is used to attract fish for the purpose of taking fish; (B) includes an artificial fly.



OK

“Artificial fly” means a fly that is constructed by common methods known as fly tying, including a dry fly, wet fly and nymph, or a bare single hook, and that is free of bait; ...



OK

Inconsistent Regulations

17

“Help fisherman understand why all the different regulations on single vs. multiple hooks. Seems to be random.”

- Comment from 2015 Statewide Harvest Survey

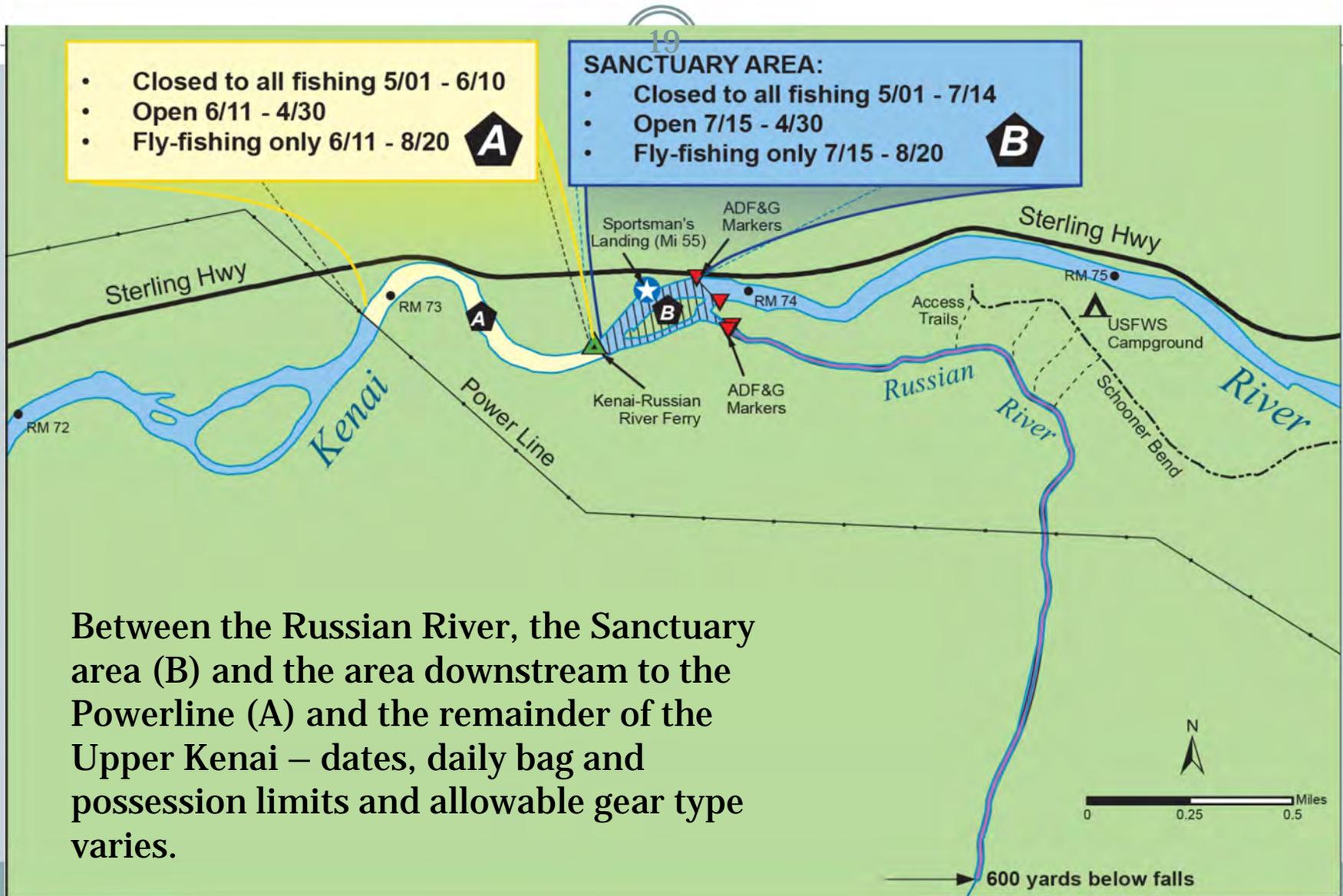
Inconsistent Regulations

18

Inconsistent regulations can include:

- **Bag and possession limits.**
- **Where and when the use of bait and multiple hooks is allowed.**
- **Example: Kenai River.**

(Inconsistency) The Upper Kenai River



(Inconsistency) Removing fish from the water

20

- There is no consistent directive when it comes to whether or not a fish, if removed from the water, becomes part of the bag limit of the person who originally hooked it.

*King salmon, coho salmon,
rainbow/steelhead trout.*

“Should make all anglers aware not to hold fish out of the water for pics if not keeping them.” - Comment from 2015 Statewide Harvest Survey



What ADF&G is Doing

21

- Work within Board of Fisheries process – reduce, simplify, standardize regulations.
- Began utilizing GovDelivery as a way to allow anglers to sign up to receive email notifications such as EOs and fishing reports.
- Working to streamline information online.

What ADF&G is Doing (cont.)

22

Ongoing Changes to Regulation Summary Booklets:

- Standardized the structure and format to make it easier to read.
- Added and standardized maps for areas with Special Regulations.
- Standardizing the lay-out and design of each book.
- Addressing FAQs where appropriate in the summary book.

What ADF&G is Doing (cont.)

23

- Regulation Modernization Project
- Moving to put sport fish regulations into a Content Management System.
- Working to take advantage of advanced mobile and web technologies that are GIS enabled and allow for greater search functionality.

What ADF&G is Doing (cont.)

24

Arranging Angler Survey/Focus Groups



In Summary

25

Anglers in Alaska

No one should choose to stay home rather than fish because the regulations are too hard to understand.



By working together, we can do better...

Public service responsibility to make sport fishing regulations easy to understand.



**Thank
You.**