

**PROPOSAL 117**

**5 AAC 07.365. Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Plan.**

Allow subsistence fishing for non-salmon fish species in Pailleq Slough when the subsistence fishery for salmon is closed, as follows:

5 AAC 07.365 **(d) (5)**

**During subsistence salmon fishing closures, that portion of Pailleq Slough upstream from a line 100 yards upstream from its confluence with the Kuskokwim River, shall remain open to subsistence fishing with gillnets.**

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** The Kuskokwim River has experienced main stem and tributary subsistence fishing closures in recent years in order to conserve Chinook salmon. The community of Eek is located on the Eek River, which is a salmon spawning tributary of the Kuskokwim River. Pailleq Slough is located up river from Eek Island off of the mainstem of the Kuskokwim River and flows into Eenayarak River. During Chinook salmon conservation subsistence fishing closures, Pailleq has also been closed even though salmon do not typically migrate up these waters. Residents would like to keep Pailleq open to fishing even in times of Chinook salmon conservation.

Traditionally, residents near the Kuskokwim River mouth and Bering Sea coast, including the community of Eek, have maintained subsistence camps on or near Pailleq Slough and have practiced subsistence activities such as fishing and berry picking while living at these camps throughout the summer season. Residents harvest whitefish, Sheefish, pike and other nonsalmon species from this location. Today, the Pailleq Slough remains important due to its proximity to the community of Eek, its historical relevance, and its subsistence opportunities. People rely on this slough during the summer fishing season because it is much closer to Eek than having to travel south to the Quinhagak area, which requires more boat fuel and expenses, in order to fish. Residents depend on Pailleq Sough to meet their physical needs and to sustain their subsistence way of life and culture. They typically use driftnets in this location since setnets cannot be used due to the strong tidal action. Keeping Pailleq Slough open even in times of conservation would also relax pressure on subsistence users when the Kuskokwim River mainstem is closed by allowing users to easily harvest other fish species nearby.

**PROPOSED BY:** William Charlie Brown

(HQ-F18-078)

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