

Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan (5 proposals)

PROPOSAL 170

5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan.

Move the ADF&G regulatory marker for personal use dipnetting on the Kasilof River north shore beach, as follows:

5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan

(c)(2)(C) from a line between ADF&G regulatory markers outside the terminus of the river on the north shore beach at **60_ 23.20' N. lat., 151_ 17.53' W. long.**, [60_ 23.25' N. LAT., 151_ 17.98' W. LONG.,] and on the south shore beach at 60_ 23.27' N. lat., 151_ 18.64' W. long., upstream for a distance of one mile.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The current dipnetting regulatory marker on the north shore of the Kasilof River unnecessarily pushes users of the fishery into closer proximity, especially noticeable during high tide. In addition to common net entanglements, the artificial containment makes fishing difficult for kids that have a hard time to find a place with enough space to effectively manage a net, and for families to fish together. The beach on the north shore continues another 1500 feet beyond the marker, and yet users are pushed side by side in a short 750 foot stretch of beach. In comparison to fishing opportunities on the opposite bank, the south shore has about 1,500 feet of normally used shoreline to dipnet from at high tide.

To alleviate the artificially imposed crowd, I propose relocating the regulatory marker on the north shore of the Kasilof River, approximately 650 feet to 60°23.20' N., 151°17.53' W. This will allow a greater area for the same number of users to dipnet.

The personal use fishery at the Kasilof River is a smaller family affair than its partner to the north, and instills passion and enjoyment in fishing beginning with children. If our children or families can't find a spot to fish together, we can't ignite the passion and enjoyment that will pass this tradition along.

PROPOSED BY: Brent Ramsay (EF-F19-047)

PROPOSAL 171

5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan.

Reduce the Kenai River personal use bag limit for king salmon to one salmon less than 36" in length, as follows:

- (1) in the Kenai River as follows,
- (B) the annual limit is as specified in 5 AAC 77.525, except that only one king salmon, **less than 36 inches in length,** may be retained per household, **king salmon caught 36 inches and longer in length must be released**

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Low abundances of "large" Kenai River king salmon trigger inseason restrictions to commercial, personal use, and sport

fisheries. By management plan intent language, Kenai River king salmon are to be managed primarily for sport and guided sport use. In an effort to put more large Kenai River king salmon inriver and provide all user groups more fishing opportunity Alaska Sportfishing Association suggests limiting Kenai River Personal Use Dip Net harvest to king salmon under 36 inches in length. This proposal is a package with a similar proposal for Upper Cook Inlet commercial fisheries.

Harvest of king salmon under 36 inches in length would still be allowed in the Kenai River personal use fishery. Any king salmon caught 36 inches or more in length, however, would be required to be released. When salmon are being caught rapidly in the personal use fishery—this size limit has the added benefit of making it easier to identify (by size) those king salmon required to be released. With this size limit, the dip net fishery could proceed without emergency inseason restriction, and unintended violations that currently occur—when dip netters mistakenly harvest small king salmon (at times king salmon harvest would currently be prohibited) would likely decrease. Personal use fishery participants would still have the opportunity to harvest a smaller king salmon. All king salmon 36 inches or larger released, and escaping through the personal use and sport fishery, would count toward achievement of the Kenai River “large” king salmon escapement goal. Therefore, escapement of more “large” king salmon helps maintain fishing and harvest opportunity for all user groups.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Sportfishing Association/Martin Meigs (HQ-F19-083)

PROPOSAL 172

5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan.

Limit personal use dipnetting on the Kenai River by day of the week, as follows:

Dipnet fish is open July 10-July 31st. Head of households with last names beginning with "A" through "M" shall participate in the dipnet fishery on the Kenai river on Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. Participants with the head of household names beginning with "N" through "Z" shall dipnet on Sundays, Mondays and Tuesdays.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Kenai River beaches are over congested, there is a bacteria problem primarily from the gull activity, there is a trash problem, and there are many accidents usually during the weekends on the Seward Highway.

My suggestion is to open dipnetting on Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturdays during the season to the head of households with names beginning with A through M. Then on Sunday, Monday and Tuesdays open it for the head of households with names beginning with N through Z. This will cut the traffic, beach congestion, bacteria and trash in half on any given day.

The season dates remain the same: July 10-July 31.

PROPOSED BY: Karen McGahan (HQ-F19-011)

PROPOSAL 173

5 AAC 77.525. Personal use salmon fishery; and 5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan.

Reduce the annual limit for the Kenai River dip net fishery and create tiered harvest quotas, as follows:

I would like to see the board modify the personal use dip net total annual limit in the Kenai River, as follows:

5 AAC 77.525(c) In the personal use taking of salmon, unless otherwise specified in 5 AAC 77.500 – 5 AAC 77.548 the total annual limit for each personal use salmon fishing permit is 25 salmon for the head of a household and 10 salmon for each dependent of the permit holder, except in the Kenai River dip net fishery, the total annual limit for each personal use salmon fishing permit is 15 salmon for the head of a household and 5 salmon for each dependent of the permit holder, unless the department makes an inseason assessment estimating the total Kenai River sockeye salmon run will exceed 4.6 million fish, at which time the total annual limit for each personal use salmon fishing permit will be 25 salmon for the head of a household and 10 salmon for each dependent of the permit holder. With a fishery total catch limit of 90,000 sockeye, (in the two lower tiers). Also a fishery total catch limit of 150,000 sockeye, (in the upper tier).

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? 5 AAC 21.360 states that the department shall manage the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon stocks primarily for commercial uses based on abundance. While there are differences of opinion over what the term “primarily” means, I contend that the Kenai River dip net fishery is the fastest growing fishery in the UCI area, perhaps the whole state. It seems to me that the “primary” sockeye salmon harvester is shouldering quite a burden when it comes to dividing up the pie. 5 AAC 77.001(b) states that it is the intent of the board that the taking of fish under 5 AAC 77 will be allowed when that taking does not jeopardize the sustained yield of a resource and either does not negatively impact an existing resource use or is in the broad public interest.

The dip net harvest of sockeye salmon in the Kenai River can exceed 500,000 fish, which definitely has had a negative impact on commercial fishermen in UCI. In the Kasilof River dip net fishery, king salmon may not be retained and in the Kenai River dip net fishery, only 1 king salmon per household may be retained. Why can't a dip net harvester retain more king salmon? The answer is that it would have a negative impact on inriver sport fisheries. That leads me to ask, “Why is it OK to negatively impact the UCI sockeye salmon commercial fishery but it is not OK to negatively impact sport fishermen?”

I would like the board to review the UCI Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan and put some side-boards on this rapidly growing fishery. Provisions to consider would include, limiting the annual harvest to 15 fish per permit holder and 5 per dependent unless the Kenai River inseason run forecast estimated the run would exceed 4.6 million fish (the upper tier). With a fishery total catch limit of 90,000 sockeye, (in the two lower tiers). Also a fishery total catch limit of 150,000 sockeye, (in the upper tier). Additionally, let's put some teeth into the regulation requiring personal use permits to be returned by August 15. From 2013-2017 (last five years), approximately 7,700 personal use permits per year were never returned, even after two mail-out reminders. The

department has the names and addresses of these folks, who by law are supposed to receive a \$200 citation for failure to report. Why are they not cited? The department says, “We don’t need all of the permits returned in order to manage the fishery or to estimate harvest.” That just isn’t right. It is widely known that the dip net fishery on the Kenai River has one of the highest non-compliance rates of any fishery in the state. I am asking the board to do whatever they can to make the department do a better job of enforcing regulations. Who is making the decision that failure to return a PU permit will not be cited? An accurate daily Fish account needs to be provided to ADF&G for a daily assessment. (Or this fishery does not open.) This can be done with four checkpoints.

PROPOSED BY: Chris Every (HQ-F19-020)

PROPOSAL 174

5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan.

Prohibit set gillnets in the personal use salmon fishery if the king salmon sport fishery in the Kenai or Kasilof Rivers is restricted, as follows:

f. If the Kenai or Kasilof is restricted to bait or retention of King Salmon, the personal use fishery is limited to dipnet only.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Interception of early run King Salmon north of the Kasilof River in the personal use setnet fishery. Set nets are considered lethal gear and dipnets are not. The setnet fishery is a nondiscriminatory high impact fishery that does not allow for the viable release of early run Kenai King Salmon.

While in river, sportfishers over the last few years have been restricted. The personal use setnet fishery is relatively new, the fishery has not had an equal burden of conservation in ensuring early run King Salmon escapement goals. Make it all dipnet.

PROPOSED BY: Joe Hanes (HQ-F19-067)
