

RC 50

Mr. Chair, Board Members

My name is Christine Brandt and I am an East Side Setnetter, but more important, I am a resident of the State of Alaska and have been for over 50 years. I am here representing 4 generations of Triple K Fisheries, SOKI and myself.

Every three years we have a Board of Fish meeting for Upper Cook Inlet. Today I am asking you to think about the process. This process I believe was intended to review and assess regulations already in place. That means we should be addressing systems that have a conservation concern or have stocks of concern. It does not mean that we should change management plans that haven't had the opportunity to work, and by this, I mean go through the life cycles of sockeye and King Salmon. I would like you to think about the life cycle of the sockeye and King salmon, which is between 4 and 7 years, more than the three years between cycles. Continually regulations are changed at Board meetings. So how do we know if those regulations in place worked? We don't.

Please consider that there are already policies and regulations in place that cover proposals written for this Board of Fish meeting. Proposal 78 is unnecessary. The Department manages for these priorities already; they assess the stocks and user groups in season and adjust accordingly.

Proposal 88; ask yourself the question is this really necessary in a system that is already over escaped. Does it fit the criteria according the statewide escapement policy, 5 AAC 39.233(c) (2)?

The question to really ask the Department is how are the over escapements effecting the Kenai and Kasilof Rivers? What is the current return to spawner ratio for these systems? What are the long-term effects of continuing to over escape a system? How many sockeyes do we over escape into the Kenai and Kasilof Rivers to save how many Kenai River Late Run Kings? This thought process will have severe unintended consequences to both systems if we are not diligent about the biological escapements. The Department is already concerned about future returning spawners. Fry are going out smaller making survival rates lower.

There are no conservation concerns in either the Kenai or Kasilof Rivers currently; however my biggest fear is that when there is, it will be for sockeye and not Kings.

At this Board of Fish meeting let us look at making changes that are necessary to stocks of concern. Let's give the regulations in place, where there is no concern, the chance to make a difference and necessitate that change at a future meeting if needed.

*Christine S Brandt*