

Thank you for your service!

My name is Kurt Whitehead. My wife and I own and operate a small hunting and charter fishing lodge on Prince of Wales Island near Klawock, AK. We offer fully guided saltwater fishing trips and fully guided Coastal Black bear hunts in GMU 2. I have been guiding saltwater fishing anglers in Southeast AK every year since 2000 from the ports of Sitka, Port Alexander, Craig and Klawock. My wife and I are both, year round, full time, snow shoveling, REAL Alaskan residents. I am the Secretary for the East Prince of Wales AC and I am here today to comment on their behalf.

We unanimously support Proposal 80, the allocation of king salmon in SE AK.

Seiners have gone over their allocation the past 3 years.

We unanimously support Proposal 81, the allocation of king salmon in SE AK.

The treaty quota needs to be caught every year or we risk losing it in the future. We would like to allocate the leftover quota for the troll fishery towards the end of the summer.

We unanimously support Proposal 82, the amended king salmon management plan by ADFG with the comment that "We need to prioritize that residents will always have a season and that they will also have a season over all the commercial anglers."

We unanimously oppose Proposal 83, 84, 85, 86, 87 & 88.

We unanimously oppose Proposal 89 which is the permit stacking proposal allowing up to six lines. Currently there is no permit stacking in the troll fleet of Alaska.

We unanimously oppose Proposal 90.**We are opposed Proposal 91 by a vote of 7-2. This is the troll harvest allocation.**

We are concerned that the troll fleet will impact the sport & charter anglers. We are also opposed because it makes fishing very difficult for the charter & local anglers immediately following the troll season. It was also pointed out that the trollers are the only ones who will benefit from this proposal.

We unanimously oppose Proposal 92 which will lower the required minimum king salmon length to 26".**We unanimously oppose proposal 93 & 94.**

We unanimously support our own Proposal 110 which will require reporting and recovery of lost drift gill net gear. This proposal came about because a gill netter lost and abandoned his net outside Coffman Cove and made no effort to recover it. It was reported to the troopers by a local gill netter. AST later discovered there was no regulation being broken even though the net was still killing all kinds of fish, seals and birds. The owner stayed tied to the dock and never made an effort to recover the net.

We voted 10-3 to support proposal 117 which would allow trollers to fish six lines in inside waters.

Enforcement will be an issue. Bycatch wouldn't be an issue. Fishing in tight areas with other boats will be difficult for the anglers. If the trollers don't catch them, the seiners will catch them since they are all hatchery fish. Trollers with 4 lines will be conflicting/tangling with trollers with 6 lines in small areas. Enforcement will be difficult but if they want to fish 6 lines then let them decide. This is the only area in the state that it isn't legal. It might be self regulating.

We support proposal 119 & 120 dealing with commercial fishing boundaries.**We have officially withdrawn our Proposal 121 as confirmed by RC101.**

RC134

We are opposed to proposal 129 with a vote of 10-3 on the basis that this should not be a C&T finding since hatcheries do not get C&T protection and Southern SE Aquaculture Assoc. have struggled to meet their cost recovery goals the past few years.

We unanimously support our proposal 134 which would prohibit obstructing more than half of a stream, creek or river when subsistence fishing.

One of our members pointed out that this does not work easily when beach seining but it makes perfect sense when gill netting. This proposal is already on the books in several locations but it frequently happens in the smaller creeks.

We are unanimously opposed to proposal 143 which would require in season reporting for nonresident sport fish anglers.

Enforcement issues will be difficult to implement. Our unguided angler outfitter said this will be very difficult for them and the creel surveys already cover this data. ADFG already gets this info on a broader scale through mailed surveys.

We are unanimously opposed to proposal 144 which would establish a logbook program for rental vessels used in SE AK sport fisheries.

We agree with the intent of the proposal but also think there would be several enforcement and enactment hurdles.

We support proposal 145 by a vote of 8-5. This prop and several others like it have the same intent to reduce the bag limits for the non resident anglers. ADFG does not have any conservation concerns on this proposal.

We support our own proposal 152 with a vote of 12-1.

Salmon can spawn above the falls but there will likely be higher effort due to the closing of the Whale Pass hatchery. Our locals are concerned about the issues on 108 Ck and agree that the pool below the falls is the one we need to protect, especially during low water events. We also agree the pools below the falls need to be protected for the resource. The main culprits are the unguided nonresidents that are not just catching and keeping but catching, photographing and releasing poorly with high mortality rates. Many of the fish are snagged and all the fish are very stressed which later makes it difficult for them to make it up the falls and the rest of the creek to spawn. This usually occurs during low water events when the fish have low oxygen and high water temps and they can't get up the falls until it rains so the fish are sitting ducks for anglers. We want to make sure the creek has escapement.

We support our own proposal 153 with a vote of 12-1 with the added language to amend to limit this closure to 300' above and 300' below the lower falls only during the months of July, August and September.

Salmon have a very difficult time getting past the falls on Log Jam Creek during low water events and our members are very concerned due to the same reasons cited above.

We unanimously oppose proposal 155 which would prohibit removing salmon from the water during non retention times and prohibit treble hooks.

We are in full support of banning treble hooks. We are opposed to this proposal because it would be very difficult for saltwater anglers to release fish without removing the fish from the water while on a boat. This works in a river but not on saltwater.

Thank you,
Kurt Whitehead
East PoW AC Secretary