PROPOSAL 58
5 AAC 06.360. Naknek River Sockeye Salmon Special Harvest Area Management Plan. 
Provide increased commercial salmon fishing opportunity in the Naknek River Special Harvest 
Area, as follows:

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(i) The commissioner may open, by emergency order, the NRSHA when the Naknek River 
escapement exceeds the mid-point of the escapement goal range and is projected to exceed 
the upper end of the escapement goal range.

(A) Fishing periods may open concurrently with fishing periods in the Naknek 
Section and the Naknek-Kvichak District, except that, drift gillnet fishing 
periods may close one hour before high tide.

(B) Fish harvested in the NRSHA shall be delivered prior to fishing the Naknek 
Section or the Naknek-Kvichak District.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? 
NRSHA open concurrent to Naknek and/or N/K openings, which increases fishing area and 
reduces escapement. This proposal addresses over escapement of sockeye salmon in the Naknek 
River.

The situation as it currently exists: The Naknek River has experienced over escapement in recent 
years due to increasing runs, and unusual fish-movement patterns in which the fish swim through 
the Naknek Section and “magically” appear in the Naknek River with an express ticket to the 
spawning grounds. In such instances over 1,000,000 fish have eluded fishermen and swam up the 
river during a “push” of fish, even though the Naknek Section was open for fishing when the fish 
swam through the district. Currently fishermen are allowed to fish in the Naknek River Special 
Harvest Area (NRSHA) only as a conservation measure to protect the Kvichak River stocks, and 
are not allowed to fish with consideration of catching a push of fish that are in the river.

Situation if this proposal were enacted: When fish are “sneaking past” the fleet and winding up 
in the river in abundance, the NRSHA may be opened concurrently with the Naknek Section or 
Naknek/Kvichak district openings. This will allow for those fish to be caught, and not go up the 
river to add to the over-escapement tally. Since the in-river fishery will close one-hour prior to 
high tide, this proposal will allow for the orderly and unobstructed flow of traffic on the Naknek 
River for tug-and-barge, and salmon tendering activities. 

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