

Rationale: Under current management authority and when coho stocks reach an abundance to support a 3 fish limit ADF&G currently has the authority to increase the limit from 2 to 3 or higher. This proposal speaks to the frustration that Knik Arm drainage sport fishermen have with respect to the chronic pattern of ignoring the Board mandated directive “in accordance with stated Management Plan purposes, providing a full season of reasonable harvest opportunity for sport, guided sport, and other inriver users.” Reestablishing a 3 fish bag limit can be accomplished if restrictions in the Central District Drift gillnet fishery occur as well as those called for in the Northern District Commercial Fishery. Such changes could logically deliver more coho to Northern District streams and therefore allow the reinstatement of an additional fish to the bag limit.

However, until the impact of the combined drift gillnet harvests in Federally managed EEZ and state managed waters are resolve there is no responsible way to consider liberalizing Northern District commercial fisheries as some have called for. Greater protections for the Conservation corridor and further restrictions on the drift fleet within the harvest corridor are essential to any changes in the Northern District. Consistent with that strategy is the importance to manage the Northern District commercial fisheries conservatively until the impacts of the liberalized fishing of the EEZ are known.

244 Clarify boundaries of Fish Creek mouth (ADFG Proposal)

Support

Rationale: Regulatory markers posted at the mouth of Fish Creek do not adequately delineate fresh vs. salt water because the markers, due to large tidal fluctuations, must be posted at a higher elevation, well upstream of mean low tide that distinguishes fresh from salt water in statewide regulations. Special regulations that restrict salmon harvest in the Fish Creek sport fishery to three salmon per day, of which only two may be a coho salmon and limit fishing to weekend only, currently do not conserve salmon caught within the Fish Creek channel downstream of the markers where sport fishing under saltwater regulations is allowed seven days per week, with six salmon allowed per day. Returning to the definition for fresh waters given in statewide regulations, and adding a quarter-mile radius to the freshwater determination, will ensure special regulations developed for Fish Creek salmon conserve all salmon entering the Fish Creek channel that are bound for Fish Creek.

245 Increase opportunity to sport fish for salmon in Fish Creek

No Action

Rationale: We look forward to the ADF&G comments as they will help inform us on how we ultimately respond to this proposal.

246 List lakes where anglers can use up to five lines for NP (ADFG Proposal)

Support

Rationale: Northern pike are a predatory fish invasive to Southcentral Alaska and can pose a significant threat to salmon and resident fish species in the region. To encourage anglers to harvest northern pike, systems that primarily contain northern pike have regulations allowing anglers to use five lines through the ice. Expanding that list to include the proposed waters may encourage anglers to fish these areas and harvest northern pike. Northern pike were eradicated from Anderson Lake and this lake can now be removed from the list.

247 Prohibit chumming in specific waters (ADFG Proposal)

Support

Rationale: Regulations prohibiting use of bait during the ice fishery on Big Lake are difficult to enforce. Determining whether an angler is using bait or an attractant on the hook while chumming is difficult; an angler may be scenting hooks under the guise of chumming to attract fish.

Rationale: Review of Statewide Harvest Survey (SWHS) data shows a decline in the abundance of Arctic Char, particularly of large fish over 20 inches in length. Non-retention would maximize recruitment into mature age classes and maximize spawning events to help rebuild the stock. ADF&G has been issuing EO's to restrict sport fishing for Arctic char in Big Lake to catch-and-release only for the past two calendar years.

Mirror and Flat lakes have direct connections with Big Lake, allowing migration and sharing of fish between lakes. Resident species such as Arctic Char and burbot in Big Lake are no longer protected by conservative regulation when they migrate to neighboring Mirror and Flat lakes.

249 Bookkeeping by ADFG Support

Rationale: This proposal updates the stocked lakes list for the Knik Arm drainage. Stocking has been discontinued in one lake and newly initiated in several lakes. Anglers may miss the benefit of greater bag limits for stocked waters and enforcement would not be able to monitor fisheries appropriately.

[Anchorage Area Sport Fisheries](#)

250 Modify closure date for Ship Creek No Action

251 Reduce opportunity to harvest salmon in Eklutna drainage Defer to ADFG

252 Restore bag and possession limit of three coho, up from two Defer to ADFG

253 Dropper flies Oppose

Rationale: This proposal seeks to allow two flies to be used in tandem (dropper) and rightly points out that this is common gear in most trout waters of the American west. However, missing from those waters are salmon and the potential affect that adding gear to the fishery may have on catch rate of other species is of concern.

254 Add Chester Creek to special management waters for trout No Action

255 Create a personal use dip net fishery for salmon in the 20 Mile and Placer Rivers Defer to ADFG

Rationale: Concerns with potential for overharvest; ADF&G comments would also help here. However, both the 20 mile and Placer Rivers are located on the road system within 58 miles of Alaska's largest community. These systems support small returns of salmon and currently support a directed and at times large salmon sport fishery. It is our opinion that these systems would have difficulty supporting a personal use dip net fishery.

Committee of the Whole – Group 4: Stock of Concern – Kenai River Late Run King Salmon Management Plan, Kenai River King Salmon, Upper Cook Inlet Salt Water King Salmon Sport Fishery Plan (46 Proposals)

The MSB Fish and Wildlife Commission elected to not address this group of proposals.

The MSB Fish and Wildlife Commission elected to not address this group of proposals.

Committee of the Whole - Group 6: Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan, Fishing Districts and Gillnet Specifications and Operations, Pink Salmon Management Plan, Hatchery Production, Upper Cook Inlet Management Plan, West Cook Inlet Salmon (25 Proposals)

[Central District Drift Gillnet](#)

121 Repeal intent language that has guided regulatory development of drift fishery since 1990's and replace with language that favors harvest by drift fishery Oppose

Rationale: Allocation of salmon resources for the benefit of Alaskans rest with the Board of Fisheries. Decisions to place the statement “in accordance with stated Management Plan purposes, providing a full season of reasonable harvest opportunity for sport, guided sport, and other inriver users” on the use of these common property resources takes into account the number of beneficial users and the impact to state and local economies. Preferences provided in the current plan address those considerations. The only change necessary to fully implement these directives are more deliberate efforts to manage the commercial fishery in the Central District Drift Gillnet fishery for fish passage to the Northern District, and are warranted now more than ever.

With the pending implementation of Federal Management in the EEZ and the attendant increases in harvest potential it is imperative that the Board move quickly to implement conservative actions in state managed waters. The commission recommends: 1) Area 1. Close ALL state managed waters in the Anchor Point Section and all state waters west of the expanded Kasilof to commercial to drift gillnet fishing. 2) Confine all state managed drift gillnet fisheries to the harvest corridor using one or more of the following; the Kasilof section, Expanded Kasilof Section, Kenai Section, and/or the Expanded Kenai Section of the Harvest Corridor, and 3) Consider the possibility of placing state managed waters as defined in 2 above under a Super Exclusive fishery management system.

The uncertainty and potential threat from Federal salmon management within the Cook Inlet EEZ cannot be overstated. Current discussions regarding Total Allowable Catch (TAC) within the EEZ are shocking and when coupled with a lack of timely inseason responsiveness within the Federal management system leaves the Board with little alternative except to apply the precautionary principle to fisheries within their management authority.

122 Repeal the ‘one percent rule’ in the Central District drift gillnet fishery Oppose

Rationale: Maintaining the 1% rule is important to implement the management directive “in accordance with stated Management Plan purposes, providing a full season of reasonable harvest opportunity for sport, guided sport, and other inriver users” for coho salmon moving through the Central District bound for the Northern District. A predictable and managed end to the commercial fishery is essential in meeting this Board approved mandate.

More deliberate efforts to manage the commercial fishery in the Central District Drift Gillnet fishery for fish passage to the Northern District are warranted now more than ever. With the pending implementation of Federal Management in the EEZ and the attendant increases in harvest potential it is imperative that the Board move quickly to implement conservative actions in state managed waters. We strongly favor: 1) Area 1. Close ALL state managed waters in the Anchor Point Section and all state waters

west of the expanded Kasilof to commercial to drift gillnet fishing. 2) Confine all state managed drift gillnet fisheries to the harvest corridor using one or more of the following; the Kasilof section, Expanded Kasilof Section, Kenai Section, and/or the Expanded Kenai Section of the Harvest Corridor and 3) Consider the possibility of placing state managed waters as defined in 2 above under a Super Exclusive fishery management system.

The uncertainty and potential threat from Federal salmon management within the Cook Inlet EEZ cannot be overstated. Current discussions regarding Total Allowable Catch (TAC) within the EEZ are shocking and when coupled with a lack of timely inseason responsiveness within the Federal management system leaves the Board with little alternative except to apply the precautionary principle to fisheries within their management authority.

123 Repeal the “one percent rule” from Upper Cook Inlet commercial salmon fishery management plans **Oppose**

Rationale: See comments for proposal 122.

124 Repeal the “one percent rule” from Upper Cook Inlet commercial salmon fishery management plans **Oppose**

Rationale: See comments for proposal 122.

125 Repeal sections of the CDDGFMP to provide additional commercial opportunity for drift fishery **Oppose**

Rationale: See comments for proposal 121.

126 Increase drift gillnet fishing opportunity in Drift Gillnet Area 2 **Oppose**

Rationale: See comments for proposal 121.

127 Increase time for Drift Fishery to two 12 hr. openings inlet wide and one 12 hr. opening in 6-mile corridor each week **Oppose**

Rationale: See comments for proposal 121.

[Fishing Seasons, Weekly Periods, Set Gillnet Gear, and Registration](#)

128 North K Beach shall fish with both Kasilof and Kenai **No Action**

129 Allow North K Beach to fish early with Kasilof openings **No Action**

130 Lengthen set net season through end of August **No Action**

132 Add Wednesday as a third regular period for set nets **Oppose**

This proposal does not take into consideration area and time where fishers will be fishing. It addresses all gear types and all fishing areas within Upper Cook Inlet. It is also only takes into consideration escapement requirements for sockeye destined to the Kasilof and Kenai Rivers.

Given the uncertainty if the impact of the EEZ and current challenges with moving salmon to the Northern District additional regular fishing periods should not occur. The additional fishing power is unwarranted and will disrupt the biological and allocative benefits of Windows incorporated into existing management plans. This proposal does not take into consideration area and time where fishers will be fishing. It addresses all gear types and all fishing areas within Upper Cook Inlet. It is also only takes into consideration escapement requirements for sockeye destined to the Kasilof and Kenai Rivers. More deliberate efforts to manage the commercial fishery in the Central District Drift Gillnet fishery for fish passage to the Northern District are warranted now more than ever.

With the pending implementation of Federal Management in the EEZ and the attendant increases in harvest potential it is imperative that the Board move quickly to implement conservative actions in state managed waters. We strongly favor: 1) Area 1. Close ALL state managed waters in the Anchor Point Section and all state waters west of the expanded Kasilof to commercial to drift gillnet fishing. 2) Confine all state managed drift gillnet fisheries to the harvest corridor using one or more of the following; the Kasilof section, Expanded Kasilof Section, Kenai Section, and/or the Expanded Kenai Section of the Harvest Corridor and 3) Consider the possibility of placing state managed waters as defined in 2 above under a Super Exclusive fishery management system.

The uncertainty and potential threat from Federal salmon management within the Cook Inlet EEZ cannot be overstated. Current discussions regarding Total Allowable Catch (TAC) within the EEZ are shocking and when coupled with a lack of timely inseason responsiveness within the Federal management system leaves the Board with little alternative except to apply the precautionary principle to fisheries within their management authority.

133 If set nets do not fish at least 2 12's a week then other fisheries must be closed or restricted "equally"

No Action

134 Commercial fisheries must fish at least 2 days per week

Oppose

Rationale: This proposal would establish two 12-hour Inlet wide fishing periods regardless of run size or status by repealing restrictions that have been designed to provide for terminal stock fisheries management, distribute fishing opportunity across all users and provide for sustainable returns to inland waters. Inlet-wide fishing results in indiscriminate mixed-stock harvests and does not take into account the differing run strengths and productivity levels of stocks that make up these mixed stock fisheries.

The Board moved past this old system when they established the harvest corridor and intentionally used it to target Kenai and Kasilof sockeye effectively. This restricts drift fishing in the conservation corridor, allowing for the passage of Northern-bound stocks.

More deliberate efforts to manage the commercial fishery in the Central District Drift Gillnet fishery for fish passage to the Northern District are warranted now more than ever.

With the pending implementation of Federal Management in the EEZ and the attendant increases in harvest potential it is imperative that the Board move quickly to implement conservative actions in state managed waters. We strongly favor: 1) Area 1. Close ALL state managed waters in the Anchor Point Section and all state waters west of the expanded Kasilof to commercial to drift gillnet fishing. 2) Confine all state managed drift gillnet fisheries to the harvest corridor using one or more of the following; the Kasilof section, Expanded Kasilof Section, Kenai Section, and/or the Expanded Kenai Section of the Harvest Corridor and 3) Consider the possibility of placing state managed waters as defined in 2 above under a Super Exclusive fishery management system.

The uncertainty and potential threat from Federal salmon management within the Cook Inlet EEZ cannot be overstated. Current discussions regarding Total Allowable Catch (TAC) within the EEZ are shocking and when coupled with a complete lack of inseason responsiveness within the Federal management system leaves the Board with no alternative except to apply the precautionary principle to fisheries within their management authority.

135 Close Chinitna Bay Subdistrict to commercial fishing for salmon **No Action**

136 Prohibit commercial drift fishing within 1 mile of mouth of Silver Salmon and Shelter creeks **Support**

Rationale: This proposal seeks to create a 1-mile buffer around the mouths of Silver Salmon and Shelter Creeks in an effort to conserve coho salmon. This is a commonsense proposal that is similar to others around the state that protect mouths of streams from creek robbing.

137 Add Susitna and Little Susitna Rivers to the list of waters in the ND where commercial fishing is prohibited within one statute mile of the terminus. **Support**

Rationale: Area protections have long been used in fisheries around the state to prevent river and creek mouths from being corked off. This is a commonsense proposal that will have lasting conservation benefits.

The uncertainty and potential threat from Federal salmon management within the Cook Inlet EEZ cannot be overstated. Current discussions regarding Total Allowable Catch (TAC) within the EEZ are shocking and when coupled with a complete lack of inseason responsiveness within the Federal management system leaves the Board with no alternative except to apply the precautionary principle to fisheries within their management authority.

138 Allow use of a seine lead in the set net fishery and redefine minimum distance between gear **No Action**

139 Allow reef nets **No Action**

140 Allow reef nets **No Action**

141 Direct or incentivize use of 29 mesh depth gill nets in the upper subdistrict at all times (KRSA Proposal) **No Action**

142 Require that jack king salmon be recorded on fish tickets **Defer to ADFG**

143 Allow Upper Cook Inlet set gillnet permit holders to fish in more than one registration area per year **Oppose**

This proposal would drastically increase fishing power within the set gillnet fleet and increase interception of Northern District salmon stocks which will drastically alter the allocation of salmon resources addressed by current management plans.

Hatchery Production

43 Reduce hatchery production **Support**

The MSB FWC encourages the Board to consider limiting pink salmon hatchery production, as called for in Proposal 43, as a means to reduce competition with juvenile king salmon. There is uncertainty in the driver behind the decline of western Alaska king salmon stocks, however, many suggest it is an ocean related event in the early stages of development. Dramatic declines as we have seen in Cook Inlet stocks calls for conservative management actions and application of the precautionary principle. A July 12, 2023 report in Fisheries Management and Ecology in which a global literature search of peer-reviewed publications (1970–2021) evaluating how hatchery salmonids affected wild salmonids, found that hatcheries commonly have adverse impacts on wild salmonids in freshwater and marine environments. We believe the reducing competition by reducing pink salmon hatchery releases, may assist with king salmon recovery.

[Pink Salmon](#)

144 Add commercial fishing time for set and drift to target pink salmon, no mention of king salmon conservation **Oppose**

145 Add commercial fishing time for set and drift to target pink salmon, no mention of king salmon conservation or allocation of coho salmon **Oppose**

Committee of the Whole – Group 7: Kasilof King Salmon Sport Fisheries, Vessel and Habitat Restrictions, and Guides (15 Proposals)

The MSB Fish and Wildlife Commission elected to not address this group of proposals.

Committee of the Whole- Group 8: Kenai, Kasilof, and Russian River – Sport and Personal Use (39 Proposals)

The MSB Fish and Wildlife Commission elected to not address this group of proposals.

MSB Fish & Wildlife Commission Chair, Andy Couch