

PROPOSAL 85

Chairman and Board Members,

This is another laughable proposal. And more importantly a vindictive proposal from an upset set net fisherman trying to punish the sportfisherman group. The purpose of this proposal is not to protect King salmon but rather it appears intended to cause pain to another user group as a backlash to paired restrictions.

The justification for this proposal starts out with referencing the impact to ESSN (east side set net fisherman) rather than an intended goal of conservation. It starts with "Large Late Run Kenai King numbers are continuing to decline despite incredible restrictions on the ESSN Fishery."

The proposal goes on to say "In-river users have experienced negligible impact from closing the king fishery." Negligible?? I'm only realistically able to fish from July 15-Sept 15. I grew up catching Kings in May and June, and now I just stare at the river in sadness.

Since the 1980's, there has been heavy boat traffic on the Kenai River and that has not now suddenly changed King salmon spawning 40+ years later. In addition, there has been SIGNIFICANTLY less boat traffic on the lower Kenai River the past 6-7 years since King salmon fishing has been so heavily restricted and/or non-existent. I used to wake up and count 20 boats backtrolling on the river out front and heavy boat traffic up an down the river. Now, there is obviously not a single boat trolling for King salmon and much, much less boat traffic than traditionally experienced for many years on the Kenai River.

Kings spawn in the main channel in 6-10 feet of water. This is "not" shallow as referenced by the so-called "study."

The proposer testified that perhaps the Kasilof king fishery was still viable because it was a drift fishery. The Kasilof River king fishery is HATCHERY SUPPORTED. It has nothing to do with a Drift boat vs motorized vessel issue. Give me a break.

This proposal would effectively close sportfishing for red salmon for any resident, tourist, etc. that does not own property, or does not go to one of a few limited public entry points. And it would close all silver salmon fishing in Aug. Effectively, basically eliminating fishing for two species for two months. Every Alaskan that fished the Kenai with a motorized vessel may as well sell it too because we have no idea when the Kings will come back.

The trickle-down effect from a loss of tourism would greatly impact the Soldotna / Kenai community and business owners. Much more so than just Kenai River salmon guides.

I'm writing to oppose this proposal. I know many board members may not be intimately familiar with the Kenai River and it saddens me that someone would even propose something like this.

Sincerely,

Rob Boyer