

THE NEED FOR POLICY

Since significant commercial harvest of pink salmon began in Resurrection Bay in 1968, there have been conflicts between sport and commercial fishermen.

The problem revolves around two basic issues:

1. To protect the harvestable surplus of coho salmon for the intense recreational fishery;
2. To manage the surplus pink salmon stocks in a manner to provide a commercial fishery and incidental catch by the recreational fishery.

There is a need to establish policy to define how the pink salmon resource of Resurrection Bay is to be utilized in order to minimize conflicts between user groups and to set forth necessary management guidelines.

There presently exists a strong even-year run of pink salmon to Resurrection Bay. Indications are that the odd-year run of pink salmon is building and may eventually reach the level of the even-year run. The magnitude of the even-year run is currently large enough to support a viable commercial and recreational fishery.

It is the Department's contention that in years when pink salmon are abundant, the fisheries can be managed to protect the coho salmon for the recreational fishery and manage the pink salmon stocks to provide for a recreational and commercial fishery.

STATEMENT OF PROGRAM

1. Commercial fishing for pink salmon will not commence until after July 15. The purpose of this strategy is:
  - a. To protect early coho salmon from commercial exploitation and assure optimum recreational opportunity for these fish;
  - b. To provide more and better assessment of pink salmon abundance.
2. No commercial fishery will be permitted within 48 hours preceding the start of the derby.
3. No commercial fishing would be allowed after the derby because of the numbers of coho salmon in the bay at that time. Also, few pink salmon remain in the bay by the end of the derby.
4. Management will strive for reasonable separation by areas by fishery to reduce user conflicts.

5. Any commercial fishery will be closely monitored by Commercial Fisheries, Sport Fish and Fish and Wildlife Protection personnel. Fish and Game personnel will be aboard tenders to monitor catches and make periodic checks of actual seining operations to minimize incidental catches of coho salmon.

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Gordon Jensen, Chairman  
Alaska Board of Fisheries

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