RC

RC 279

SOUTH K BEACH INDEPENDENT

FISHERMEN'S ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 1632 Kenai, Alaska 99611-1632 (907) 283-5098

Protecting and Preserving the Kasilof River Aquarian System

February 12, 2014

Alaska Board of Fisheries
Board Support Section
P.O. Box 11526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

RE: Cook Inlet Regulatory Meeting 01.31 – 02.13.2014

Proposal 133

Chairman Karl Johnstone,

Concerning the parity of kings caught under 28" (smaller sized kings under 75cm) in the Kenai River by sport fishermen and whether to enumerate East Side Set Net (ESSN) smaller king salmon on a commercial fishery fish ticket report.

Please see attached documents:

Fishery Management Report No. 13-51

2010-2012 Annual Management Report and 2013 Recreational Fisheries Overview for Northern Kenai Peninsula: Fisheries under Consideration by the Alaska Board of Fisheries, 2014

Page 7 explains the annual limit for king salmon.

The attached table; **Kenai River Late-run Chinook salmon age composition proportions of commercial set gillnet and inriver sport harvests, 1986-2012**

The bottom of the table gives the average length of age class kings.

Thank you,

Paul A. Shadura II

Chinook salmon return to Kenai River in two distinct runs, early and late. The early run usually has "fishable" numbers by mid-May and it peaks in mid-June. The majority of the stocks have passed through the fishery by late June. Late-run fish are present in July and early August. Early-run Chinook salmon primarily spawn in tributaries to the Kenai River, and most of the spawning occurs in two primary tributaries, the Killey and Funny Rivers. Late-run fish primarily spawn in the mainstem Kenai River.

The recreational fishery for Chinook salmon in the Kenai River is internationally recognized due to its proximity to major population centers, relative ease of access, and large-sized Chinook salmon. Consequently, large numbers of anglers participate in this recreational fishery every year. Because of the high level of participation in relation to the total number of Chinook salmon in the return, the fishery is strictly regulated. Chinook salmon fishing is limited to a 50-mile area downstream from Skilak Lake (Figure 3). The season is January 1 through July 31. By regulation, the early-run Kenai River Chinook salmon fishery ends on June 30. The daily bag and possession limit is one Chinook salmon, 20 inches or greater in length, with a protective slot limit (no retention, must be released) for Chinook salmon greater than 46 inches and less than or equal to 55 inches in total length. The annual (January 1-December 31) limit is two fish. However, Chinook salmon harvested prior to July 1 that are 20 inches or more in length but less than 28 inches in length do not count toward the annual limit of two fish. During 2008, the BOF, modified the annual limit for Chinook salmon less than 28 inches but greater than 20 inches and also adjusted the protected slot limit by changing it from 44 to 55 inches to 46 to 55 inches.

The majority of the harvest is taken by anglers in boats. After retaining a Chinook salmon that counts toward the annual limit, an angler is prohibited from fishing from a boat in the Kenai River downstream from Skilak Lake for the remainder of that day.

The Kenai River Chinook salmon fishery supports an industry that provides sport fishing guide services. Since 1982, guides have been required to register with the Alaska Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Guided anglers are more intensively regulated than unguided anglers. This is due, in part, to the guided fishermen's greater harvest efficiency and the general concern regarding harvest parity between guided and unguided anglers.

Nearly all of the river area available to Chinook salmon fishing is managed as a state park by the Department of Natural Resources, Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation (DPOR). In 1986, DPOR reduced the maximum size of outboard motors that could be legally used on the river to 50 horsepower. In 1987, the maximum legal horsepower was further reduced to 35 horsepower. In 2008, a DPOR regulation became effective that raised the maximum size of outboard motors that can be legally used on the river to 50 horsepower, provided those greater than 35 horsepower be four-stroke or two-stroke direct fuel injection (DFI) outboard motors. In addition, during the month of July, all outboard motors operating on the Kenai River must be four-stroke or two-stroke DFI. This regulation expired after the 2012 season and, beginning in 2013 all outboard motors operating on the Kenai River must be four-stroke or two-stroke DFI year-round. There is no evidence to indicate that the change in horsepower changed angler efficiency.

Under current BOF policy, the early-run is managed for the inriver sport and guided sport fishery. Although harvest is known to be relatively minor, early-run fish are intercepted in the mixed-stock Cook Inlet marine sport fishery prior to their entry into the Kenai River (Begich 2007, 2010a). In addition, there are small numbers of early-run Chinook salmon harvested in the Kenaitze Indian Tribal Association's educational fishery (Table 7). Commercial harvests of

Kenai River late-run Chinook salmon age composition proportions of commercial set gillnet and inriver sport harvests, 1986-2012.

	Age composition proportions									
	of commercial set gillnet harvest					of inriver sport harvest				
Year	3[a]	4[b]	5[c]	6[d]	7[e]	3[a]	4[b]	5[c]	6[d]	7[e]
1986	0.01	0.23	0.37	0.34	0.03	0.00	0.10	0.39	0.45	0.05
1987	0.02	0.13	0.33	0.51	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.23	0.73	0.03
1988	0.03	0.11	0.15	0.69	0.03	0.01	0.00	0.03	0.79	0.17
1989	0.01	0.15	0.21	0.53	0.09	0.00	0.01	0.11	0.71	0.17
1990	0.01	0.30	0.30	0.34	0.05	0.01	0.10	0.16	0.62	0.12
1991	0.01	0.25	0.33	0.39	0.02	0.00	0.05	0.12	0.77	0.06
1992	0.02	0.15	0.28	0.50	0.04	0.00	0.02	0.15	0.76	0.06
1993	0.03	0.13	0.21	0.59	0.04	0.00	0.02	0.06	0.86	0.06
1994	0.04	0.13	0.15	0.60	0.07	0.00	0.02	0.04	0.91	0.03
1995	0.03	0.24	0.31	0.35	0.06	0.01	0.08	0.10	0.71	0.11
1996	0.04	0.19	0.34	0.40	0.02	0.00	0.06	0.37	0.55	0.02
1997	0.08	0.15	0.30	0.45	0.02	0.01	0.03	0.23	0.72	0.01
1998	0.12	0.24	0.23	0.39	0.02	0.02	0.12	0.12	0.71	0.03
1999	0.02	0.26	0.25	0.44	0.03	0.00	0.11	0.28	0.57	0.04
2000	0.09	0.13	0.39	0.38	0.01	0.02	0.03	0.31	0.63	0.01
2001	0.12	0.40	0.15	0.32	0.01	0.02	0.12	0.15	0.69	0.02
2002	0.13	0.30	0.36	0.20	0.01	0.02	0.05	0.23	0.68	0.02
2003	0.04	0.52	0.24	0.19	0.02	0.02	0.15	0.19	0.64	0.01
2004	0.06	0.24	0.43	0.26	0.01	0.01	0.09	0.27	0.59	0.03
2005	0.03	0.27	0.21	0.48	0.02	0.00	0.03	0.18	0.76	0.03
2006	0.13	0.35	0.22	0.27	0.03	0.01	0.11	0.21	0.62	0.06
2007	0.05	0.43	0.23	0.29	0.01	0.00	0.11	0.30	0.52	0.07
2008	0.10	0.20	0.28	0.41	0.02	0.00	0.05	0.28	0.59	0.09
2009	0.14	0.51	0.12	0.22	0.01	0.00	0.16	0.20	0.61	0.02
2010	0.20	0.26	0.34	0.19	0.01	0.04	0.14	0.40	0.38	0.04
2011	0.05	0.34	0.25	0.35	0.01	0.01	0.16	0.21	0.58	0.03
2012	0.10	0.18	0.37	0.36	0.00	0.25	0.00	0.00	0.75	0.00
Mean	0.06	0.25	0.27	0.39	0.03	0.02	0.07	0.20	0.66	0.05

[a] Age 3 fish are comprised of age classes 0.2 and 1.1. Average length of this age class is 16.9 inches.

[b] Age 4 fish are comprised of age classes 0.3, 1.2, and 2.1. Average length of this age class is 25.6 inches.

[c] Age 5 fish are comprised of age classes 0.4, 1.3, and 2.2. Average length of this age class is 32.6 inches.

[d] Age 6 fish are comprised of age classes 0.5, 1.4, and 2.3. Average length of this age class is 40.1 inches.

[e] Age 7 fish are comprised of age classes 1.5 and 2.4. Average length of this age class is 43.7 inches.

Source: Alaska Department of Fish and Game.