

PROPOSAL 34 - 5 AAC 24.361. Copper River King Salmon Management Plan. Amend the Copper River King Salmon Management Plan to provide additional management measures for king salmon in the Glennallen Subdistrict subsistence fishery as follows:

(e) In the Glennallen Subdistrict subsistence salmon fishery, if the commissioner determines that additional conservation measures are necessary to achieve the escapement goals, the commissioner may, by emergency order, close the Glennallen Subdistrict subsistence fishery season and immediately reopen a season during which **any one or a combination of the following restrictions may be taken to reduce king salmon harvest in the Glennallen Subdistrict subsistence salmon fishery in the following priority order:**

(1) a bag limit is established for king salmon taken by fish wheel;

(2) the bag limit for king salmon taken by fish wheel or dip net is reduced;

(3) the retention of king salmon taken by either fish wheel or dip net is prohibited;

[OR]

(4) modify methods and means [ARE MODIFIED TO REDUCE KING SALMON HARVEST IN THE GLENNALLEN SUBDISTRICT SUBSISTENCE SALMON FISHERY].

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? In 2011, the Alaska Board of Fisheries modified the *Copper River King Salmon Management Plan* to provide the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (department) emergency order authority to restrict the harvest of king salmon in the Glennallen Subdistrict subsistence fishery to ensure the escapement goal is met. However, current language within the *Copper River King Salmon Management Plan* is limited to either prohibiting retention of king salmon or modifying methods and means. Explicit authority is needed to set or alter bag limits within the Glennallen Subdistrict subsistence fishery. The language proposed herein provides the department with emergency order authority to establish a bag limit for king salmon taken with a fish wheel and/or reduce the bag limit for king salmon taken with either a fish wheel or dip net while still providing reasonable subsistence opportunity and ensuring the Copper River king salmon sustainable escapement goal is met.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

(HQ-F14-070)

PROPOSAL 35 - 5 AAC 01.647. Copper River Subsistence Salmon Fisheries Management Plans; and 5 AAC 77.591. Copper River Personal Use Dip Net Salmon Fishery Management Plan. Prohibit the use of monofilament mesh in dip net bag webbing in subsistence and personal use fisheries, as follows:

For the purpose of this section a dip net may not be constructed of monofilament material or any other single strand "gillnet" material commonly used in commercial fishing. Dip net mesh must be constructed of braided line or other material commonly used in sport fishing landing nets designed to minimize the harm done to the fish.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? King salmon are large fish that are prone to damage from handling. King salmon caught in dipnet fisheries in dip nets made of monofilament gillnet mesh are almost always badly tangled. Most king salmon tangled in

gillnet mesh are drug up on the banks and allowed to flop around on the rocks or in the bottom of the boat until they can be untangled. By the time they are untangled they are often dead or mortally injured. The old braided mesh dip nets did not tangle fish nearly as bad as the now common gillnet mesh. King salmon in the Copper River Valley have declined and retention of king salmon in the personal use fishery has been restricted or eliminated over the last few years. The requirement to release most or all king salmon has caused the release of a high number of king salmon and the death of many valuable king salmon.

PROPOSED BY: Aaron Bloomquist (EF-C14-064)

PROPOSAL 36 - 5 AAC 01.647. Copper River Subsistence Salmon Fisheries Management Plans; and 5 AAC 77.591. Copper River Personal Use Dip Net Salmon Fishery Management Plan. In subsistence and personal use fisheries, prohibit removing a king salmon from the water if it is to be released, as follows:

A king salmon that is to be released may not be removed from the water prior to release.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? King salmon are large fish that are prone to damage from handling. King salmon caught in dipnet fisheries in dip nets are almost always badly tangled. Most king salmon caught in dip nets that are intended for release are drug up on the banks and allowed to flop around on the rocks or in the bottom of the boat until they can be untangled. By the time they are untangled they are often dead or mortally injured. King salmon in the Copper River Valley have declined and retention of king salmon in the personal use fishery has been restricted or eliminated over the last few years. The requirement to release most or all king salmon has caused the release of a high number of king salmon and the death of many valuable king salmon.

PROPOSED BY: Aaron Bloomquist (EF-C14-065)

PROPOSAL 37 - 5 AAC 01.647. Copper River Subsistence Salmon Fisheries Management Plans; and 5 AAC 77.591. Copper River Personal Use Dip Net Salmon Fishery Management Plan. Require a department operated check station to monitor subsistence and personal use harvest and permit compliance in the Chitina and Glennallen subdistricts, as follows:

5 AAC 01.XXX A 24-hour checkpoint manned by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (department) to check fish wheel permits and personal use permits and harvest levels for sockeye and Chinooks.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Reinstate a 24-hour checkpoint at Chitna and five miles from Chitina at the five mile airport. The checkpoint would be manned by the department to check fishing permits and number of sockeyes and Chinooks harvested by fish wheel and dip net.

Enforcement does not have the man power or time to check to ensure that the 10-hour regulation of checking fish wheel in this area is being enforced or to determine if over harvest is occurring. Illegal harvest will continue if a check point is not installed and manned by the department. Fish wheels at the Chitina airport and downstream to Chitina-McCarthy Bridge are run 24-hours, day and night, throughout the fishing season. Harvest of personal use fisheries are not checked to determine if fish caught matches harvest regulations.

The participation and harvest levels in this fishery have significantly increased in recent years. A checkpoint and better in-season harvest monitoring is needed in order to responsibly manage this fishery.

The amount of harvest of sockeye and Chinook from fish wheels north of Chitina-McCarthy Bridge and personal use fisheries is questionable; check point is necessary to determined harvest levels for Chinook and sockeyes.

PROPOSED BY: Ahtna Tene Nene' Customary & Traditional Use Committee (HQ-F14-030)

PROPOSAL 38 - 5 AAC 77.591. Copper River Personal Use Dip Net Salmon Fishery Management Plan. Change the opening date for the Chitina Subdistrict personal use salmon fishery to open as early as June 1, but not later than June 11, as follows:

5AAC 77.591(b)

(b) Salmon may be taken from **June 1** [JUNE 7] through September 30. The commissioner shall establish a preseason schedule, including fishing times, for the period **June 1** [JUNE 7] through August 31 based on daily projected sonar counts at the sonar counter located near Miles Lake. This abundance-based preseason schedule will distribute the harvest throughout the season. The commissioner may close, by an emergency order effective **June 1** [JUNE 7], the Chitina Subdistrict personal use salmon fishing season and shall reopen the season, by emergency order, on or before **June 11** [JUNE 7], the Chitina Subdistrict personal use salmon fishing season and shall reopen the season, by emergency order, on or before **June 11** [JUNE 15] depending on the run strength and timing of the sockeye salmon run. Adjustments shall be made to the preseason schedule based on actual sonar counts compared to projected counts. If the actual sonar count at Miles Lake is more than the projected sonar count, the commissioner shall close, by emergency order, the season and immediately reopen it during which additional fishing times will be allowed. If the actual sonar count at Miles Lake is less than the projected sonar count, the commissioner shall close, by emergency order, the season and immediately reopen it during which fishing times will be reduced by a corresponding amount of time.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Re-establish the Chitina Personal Use Dip Net Fishery (CPUDF) opening date to earliest June 1 and the latest June 11. CDPUF fishing periods are determined based on a pre-season schedule established from projected sonar counts and from the actual run strength and timing of the sockeye run. At any time the commissioner may, by emergency order, shorten or lengthen fishing times in the CPUDF based on the actual sonar counts at the Miles Lake counter. During the December 2011 Prince William Sound/ Copper River Alaska Board of Fisheries meeting in Valdez, the board

delayed the then CPUDF opening which opened June 1 and no later than June 11, to language saying the earliest opening would be June 7 and the latest June 15. This later opening was supposedly in response to getting more early fish to upriver subsistence users. Keep in mind that between 2003 and 2012 out of the average yearly total during that period of 1,549,548 sockeye and king salmon harvested by all users (commercial, personal use, subsistence and sport) the CPUDF average annual harvest during that period was 115,210 sockeye and king salmon or **7%** of the total harvest of all users. During that same period the average annual commercial harvest of sockeye and king salmon was 1,304,272 or 84% of the 1,549,548 total. If more fish are needed in the upriver subsistence fishery, the board should be looking to the 84% for their relief. Reducing, by regulation, the ability of the CPUDF dipnetters to fish by 7 days only shortens the time available to them to harvest salmon to feed their families. If the sonar counts are poor the commissioner would still have the authority to delay the CPUDF opening until June 11, but if the sonar counts are good then dipnetters should be allowed to fish on June 1 as they have in the past.

PROPOSED BY: Chitina Dipnetters Association & Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee (EF-C14-149)

PROPOSAL 39 - 5 AAC 77.591. Copper River Personal Use Dip Net Salmon Fishery Management Plan. Change the Chitina Subdistrict personal use annual limit to be based on household size, as follows:

Change the Chitina Personal Use Dip Net Fishery (CPUDF) annual bag limit to match the Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Dip Net Fishery annual bag limit (25 salmon for a permit holder and 10 salmon for each additional household member).

5 AAC 77.591 (e) would read “The annual limit for a personal use salmon fishing permit is **25 salmon for a permit holder and 10 salmon for each additional household member** [15 SALMON FOR A HOUSEHOLD OF ONE PERSON AND 30 SALMON FOR A HOUSEHOLD OF TWO OR MORE PERSONS] of which no more than one may be a king salmon.[the language addressing supplemental periods would be deleted].

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The issue we would like the Board to address is the inadequate bag limit for the CPUDF.

The current bag limit for the CPUDF is set at 15 salmon for a household of one and 30 salmon for a household of two or more. For a family of two this equates to 15 salmon per household member. For a family of six or more, however, it means five or less salmon for each member. And that’s for the entire year. That is far too little salmon for our larger families and the current bag limit does not consider how many members are in a household.

5AAC 77.591 (e) also calls for supplemental periods in the CPUDF and the taking of 10 extra salmon. These supplemental periods are problematic. They are only one week long and the timing of the periods often do not match the actual arrival of the surge of salmon into the dip net fishery and they create extra work for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, (ie. data

assessment, emergency orders, media notification). For a Fairbanks permit holder who has previously filled his bag limit, it is not worth the approx. 675 mile round trip to participate in a supplemental period for only 10 extra salmon.

The Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery has an annual bag limit of 25 salmon for a permit holder and 10 salmon for each additional household member. This is a far more equitable bag limit. We would like the Chitina Personal Use Dip Net Fishery to have the same annual bag limit as this fishery. This would standardize the bag limits for both Personal Use Dip Net fisheries and if passed by the board, supplemental periods could be eliminated.

Chitina personal use dipnetters harvest salmon to feed their families, not to make money and not for sport.

PROPOSED BY: Chitina Dipnetters Association & Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee (EF-C14-147)

PROPOSAL 40 - 5 AAC 77.XXX. New Section. Require charter operators that transport personal use fishermen keep a daily logbook, as follows:

A vessel for hire will keep a daily logbook indicating number of customers, where and by what method fish were caught, and the number by specie.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Require any vessel that commercially transports personal use fisherman to keep a daily logbook. The board and department have always stressed the need to quantify trends in our fisheries. The use of "water taxis" has increased over the last decade and there is a lack of information on how it has affected the fishery. Does it displace participants whom do not hire? Does the newer act of trawling with a dipnet from a hired vessel increase efficiency from shore based methods? A logbook system would answer these questions and more from these commercial operations.

PROPOSED BY: Shawn Gilman (EF-C14-049)

PROPOSAL 41 - 5 AAC 77.591. Copper River Personal Use Dip Net Salmon Fishery Management Plan. Repeal reduction of the Chitina Subdistrict personal use allocation if the commercial salmon fishery is closed for 13 or more consecutive days, as follows:

5 AAC 77.591 (f)

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(f) The maximum harvest level for the Chitina Subdistrict Personal Use Salmon Fishery is 100,000 - 150,000 salmon, not including any salmon in excess of the in-river goal or salmon taken after August 31. [IF THE COPPER RIVER DISTRICT COMMERCIAL SALMON FISHERY IS CLOSED FOR 13 OR MORE CONSECUTIVE DAYS, THE MAXIMUM HARVEST LEVEL IN THE CHITINA SUBDISTRICT IS REDUCED TO 50,000 SALMON.]

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Repeal the language in 5AAC 77.591 (f) “If the Copper River District commercial salmon fishery is closed for 13 or more consecutive days, the maximum harvest level in the Chitina Subdistrict is reduced to 50,000 salmon for the remainder of the season.”

The Chitina Dipnetters Association. has in the past proposed that the above language be deleted. The Chitina Personal Use Dip Net Salmon Fishery (CPUDF) has fishing periods determined by a pre-season schedule established by the commissioner using projected daily counts of salmon passing the Miles Lake sonar counter. This schedule is meant to distribute the harvest throughout the season. Adjustments shall be made to the preseason schedule based on actual sonar counts compared to projected counts. If the actual sonar count at Miles Lake is more than the projected sonar count, the commissioner shall close, by emergency order, the season and immediately reopen it during which additional fishing times will be allowed. If the actual sonar count at Miles Lake is less than the projected sonar count, the commissioner shall close, by emergency order, the season and immediately reopen it during which fishing times will be reduced by a corresponding amount of time.

As stated above, if the salmon run numbers are low triggering closures in the commercial fishery, this will also be reflected in the salmon sonar counts at Miles Lake and the commissioner will also by emergency order, close or reduce dipnet openings.

The CPUDF has an allocation of 100,000–150,000 salmon. There is no justification to reduce the dipnet fishery allocation to 50,000 because of commercial fishery closures especially when the reduction would be for the rest of the dipnet season even though salmon numbers may within a week or so rebound.

PROPOSED BY: Chitina Dipnetters Association and Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee (EF-C14-148)

PROPOSAL 42 - 5 AAC 77.591. Copper River Personal Use Dip Net Salmon Fishery Management Plan. Change the maximum harvest level for the Chitina Subdistrict personal use fishery to 100,000 salmon, as follows:

5 AAC 77.591 (f), “the maximum harvest level for the Chitina Subdistrict Personal Use Fisheries should be changed from 100,000–150,000 to a maximum of 100,000, not including any salmon in excess of the in-river goal or salmon taken after August 31. Keep the rest of 5 AAC 77.791 (f) as written in regulation.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The maximum harvest level for the Chitina Subdistrict Personal Use Fisheries should be changed from 100,000–150,000 to a maximum level to 100,000, not including any salmon in excess of in-river goal or salmon taken after August 31. Keep the rest of the regulation in 5 AAC 77.591 (f) as is.

The number of participation in the Copper River Personal Use Fisheries has increased over the years to approximately 10,000+, who fish for salmon in the Chitna Subdistrict. Copper River salmon cannot sustain impacts from the continuation of over harvesting by personal use fisheries. As more participation increases in the Copper River Personal Use Fisheries, more sockeyes will be harvested by personal use fisheries; population of sockeyes will decrease over a period of time and will create a conservation concern.

A week after the opening date of personal use fisheries, the run strength of Copper River sockeyes slows down considerably for some of the upriver subsistence use fisheries. This may or may not be due to the Copper River sockeyes run strength or timing. It could be that personal use fisheries is intercepting and harvesting most of the sockeyes. Some of the upriver subsistence fisheries have observed that harvest levels for sockeyes slackens noticeably after personal use fisheries opens for the fishing season.

PROPOSED BY: Ahtna Tene Nene' Customary & Traditional Use Committee (HQ-F14-029)

PROPOSAL 43 - 5 AAC 77.591. Copper River Personal Use Dip Net Salmon Fishery Management Plan. Establish an allocation of 3,000 king salmon to the Chitina Subdistrict personal use fishery, as follows:

5AAC 77.591(f) would read:

The maximum harvest level for the Chitina Subdistrict personal use salmon fishery is 100,000–150,000 salmon, **which includes an allocation of 3,000 king salmon**, not including any salmon in excess of the inriver goal or salmon taken after August 31.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Allocate 3,000 king salmon to the Chitina Personal Use Dip Net Fishery (CPUDF).

The CPUDF has a per permit season bag limit of 1 king salmon. Since 2009, retention of king salmon in the CPUDF has been severely restricted. From 2009–2013, because of these restrictions, the average annual harvest of king salmon in the CPUDF has been 663 fish. During that same period the average annual commercial king harvest was 12,415, for the Copper River District and Glennallen District subsistence fisheries combined it was 3,014, and for sport fisheries of the Copper River (no data yet for 2013) from 2009–2012 the annual average harvest is 1,494. Of these different fisheries, closing the CPUDF to the retention of the 1 king salmon bag limit has the least effect on increasing the escapement of king salmon to their spawning grounds.

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game relies on in-river king salmon data provided by the Eyak run mark/recapture fish wheels. Using this data in 2013, the commissioner closed king salmon retention in the CPUDF after the first 2 weeks of the dipnetting season even though final escapement numbers show final 2013 king salmon spawning escapement was 5,000 kings above the minimum.

The CPUDF is an Alaska resident only fishery. Residents use this fishery to bring home an annual supply of salmon for their families much the same as in a subsistence fishery. In 1999, the Board of Fisheries reduced the CPUDF king bag limit from 3 to 1. The 1 king bag limit was based on an entire season harvest of 3,000 king salmon. From 2000–2008 when Chitina dipnetters were allowed to harvest their 1 king unrestricted, the annual harvest ranged between 2,000–3,000. We are asking the Board to allocate 3,000 king salmon to the CPUDF so dipnetters

can harvest their 1 king unrestricted during that period when kings are passing through the dip net fishery, which usually lasts till July 15, approx. halfway through the dipnet season.

PROPOSED BY: Chitina Dipnetters Association & Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee (EF-C14-150)
