

Gene J. Sandone
BBEDC
Public Testimony in Support of
Proposal 155

Alaska Board of Fisheries
February 23, 2016

North Alaska Peninsula Salmon Northern District Management Plan

- **PROPOSAL 155** – 5 AAC 09.310. Fishing seasons; 5 AAC 09.320. Fishing periods; 5 AAC 09.330 Gear; 5 AAC 09.350. Closed waters; and 5 AAC 09.369. Northern District Salmon Fisheries Management Plan. Close the Outer Port Heiden Section (OPH) of the Northern District to commercial salmon fishing
- **PROPOSED BY:** Mitch Seybert
- **BBEDC POSITION: SUPPORT**
- **ADF&G POSITION: NEUTRAL on the allocative aspects; OPPOSE the proposal.**

Good Afternoon.

My name is Gene J. Sandone. I live in Wasilla, AK. Today I am representing Bristol Bay Economic Development Corporation.

I will speaking in support of Proposal 155.

PROPOSAL 155:
WHAT WOULD THIS PROPOSAL DO?

This proposal would close the Outer Port Heiden Section to commercial fishing.

Northern District Salmon Management Plan

5 AAC 09.369

- 5 AAC 09.369. Northern District Salmon Fisheries Management Plan (a) *The purpose of this management plan is to provide guidelines to the department for the management of salmon stocks in the Northern District of the Alaska Peninsula Management Area.*
(b) *The department shall manage the Northern District salmon fisheries on the basis of salmon abundance as determined by escapement information and catch-per-unit-effort information.* *The department shall manage each section of the Northern District as specified in this management plan and 5 AAC 09.320.*

I sure I don't have to remind you that Proposal 155 deals with the Northern District Salmon Management Plan

Northern District Salmon Management Plan 5 AAC 09.369

- (l) The Outer Port Heiden Section is open from June 20 through July 31 to commercial salmon fishing in those waters west of a line from 57° 05.52' N. lat., 158° 34.45' W. long. to 57° 08.85' N. lat., 158° 37.50' W. long. based on the abundance of Meshik River sockeye salmon.

The management of the Outer Port Heiden commercial fishery is based on the abundance of the Meshik River sockeye salmon.

Meshik River Escapement

- The primary reason that the BOF allowed the opening of the Outer Port Heiden in 2007, control of Meshik River sockeye salmon escapement, has now been substantially diminished primarily because of increases in the SEG since 2006.

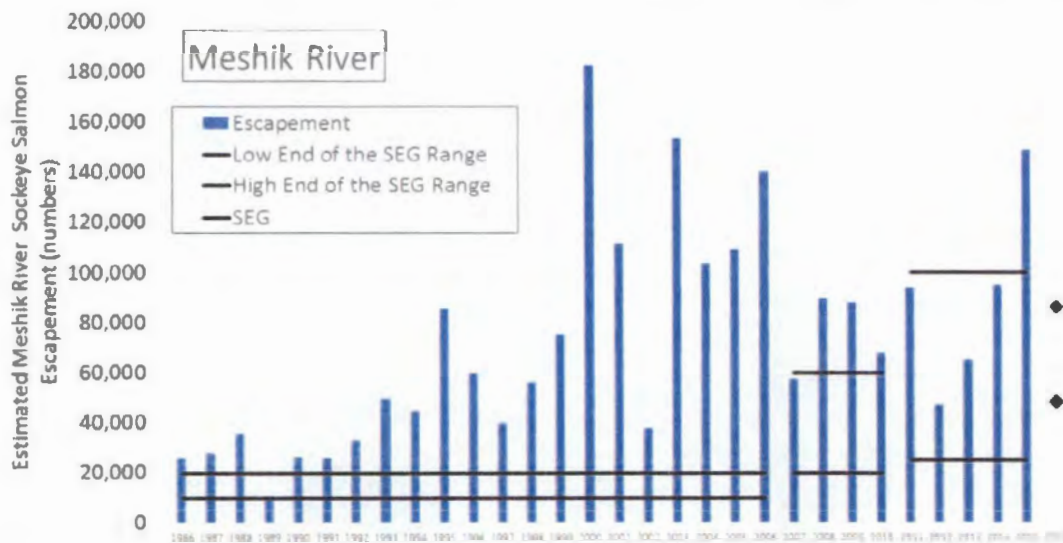
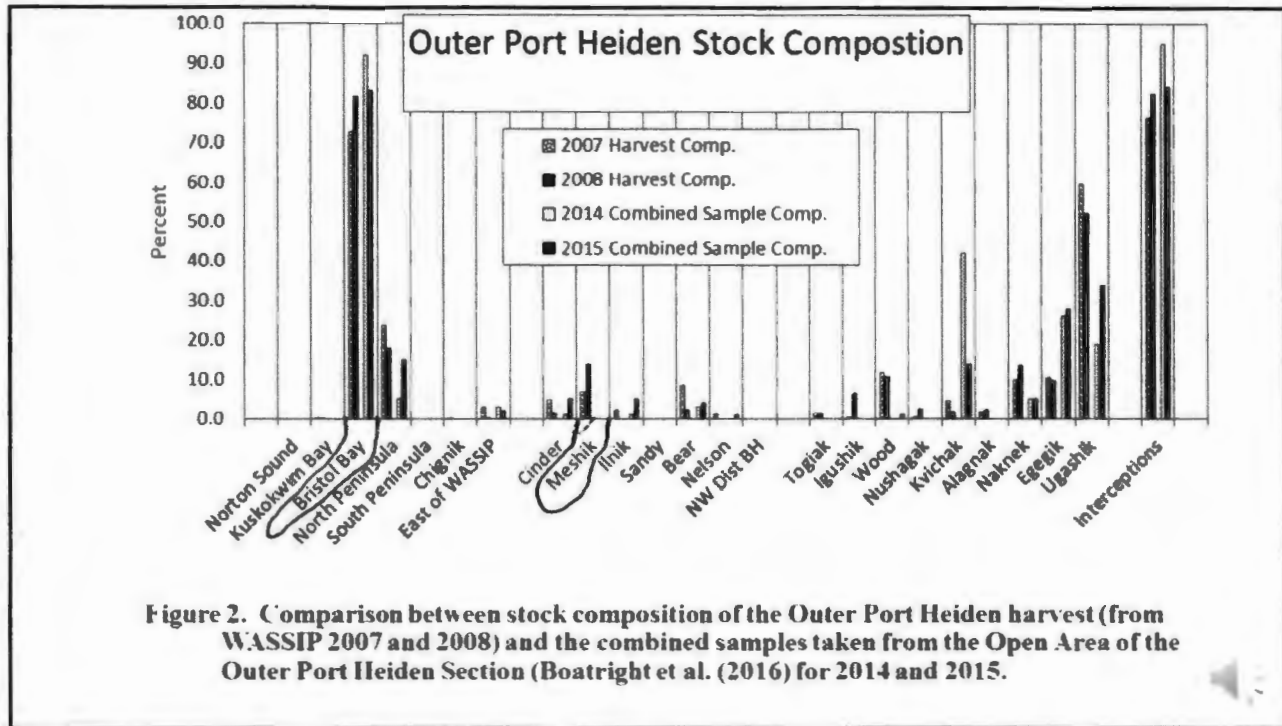


Figure 1. Estimated Meshik River sockeye salmon escapement and associated Sustainable Salmon Escapement (SEG) ranges, 1986-2015. The dots in 2016 represent the new ADF&G recommended SEG for this stock.

- There has been 3 changes to the Meshik River sockeye salmon SEG starting in 2007.
- In 2007, ADF&G changed the long standing SEG of 10K-20K to 20K to 60K.
- The next Board cycle, in 2011, ADF&G changed the SEG to 25K to 100K
- ADF&G is recommending yet another change to the SEG of 48K to 86K.
- These changes in the SEG effectively eliminated the huge surplus of Meshik River salmon identified by the BOF in 2007.

Meshik River Salmon Contribution to the Outer Port Heiden Harvest

- The Outer Port Heiden Section fishery does not target Meshik River salmon nor does Meshik River salmon contribute substantially to the Outer Port Heiden Section harvest.



- The OPH harvest and fish available for harvest is dominated by Bristol Bay stocks. GSI studies in four different years has estimated that either the harvest or the fish present and available for harvest in the Outer Port Heiden Section has ranged from 73% in 2007 to 92% in 2014.
- It is apparent the Outer Port Heiden Section fishery does not target Meshik River-origin fish nor does its harvest substantial quantities of Meshik River-origin salmon. The effect of this fishery on Meshik River escapement is, at best, minimal.
- Note the contribution of Meshik River sockeye salmon to the OPH harvest was 7% in 2007 and 14% in 2008 in the WASSIP years.
- Harvest rate for this stock in the OPH fishery was 12% and 13% in 2007 and 2008 respectively
- During 2014 and 2015, Meshik River-origin salmon contributed 0% to both years combined samples (Boatright et al. 2016).

PROPOSAL 155

- **Because of these reasons, we conclude that the Outer Port Heiden fishery has not met and is not meeting the stated objectives established for this fishery in the management plan.**
- **Therefore, we believe that this fishery should be closed.**