

PROPOSAL 97 – 5 AAC 01.280. Subsistence fishing permits. Create a permitting system for king salmon subsistence fishing in the Kuskokwim River, as follows:

5 AAC 01.280. Subsistence fishing permits is amended to read:

Fish may be taken for subsistence purposes without a subsistence fishing permit, **except Chinook salmon may be taken in the Kuskokwim River under authority of a subsistence fishing permit.**

(a) Only one subsistence fishing permit may be issued to a household per year. The permit must be retained, and in the possession of the permittee, and readily available for inspection upon request by a peace officer of the state, while taking or transporting Kuskokwim River king salmon taken for subsistence uses under this permit.

(b) A record of subsistence-caught king salmon must be kept on the reverse side of the permit. The record must be completed immediately upon taking subsistence-caught king salmon and must be returned to the local representative of the department no later than September 30.

(c) Permit limits: only one subsistence fishing permit may be issued to a household; and an annual limit of Chinook taken may be attached to this permit to be set by ADFG management.

(d) A permittee who fails to comply with reporting requirements in this section is ineligible to receive a subsistence fishing permit for Kuskokwim River king salmon subsistence fishing during the following calendar year, unless the permit applicant demonstrates to the department that failure to report was due to unavoidable circumstances; notwithstanding the provisions of this paragraph, the department may determine that it is administratively impractical to apply the penalty for failure to report.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Stony-Holitna Advisory Committee submitted three separate proposals to use as tools in addressing this issue. The three proposals (see Proposals 94 and 96) would be most effectively considered as a group in sequential order with this being the third proposal. However, each proposal could stand alone.

Reasonable opportunity for subsistence harvest of Chinook salmon has not been provided for many years in the middle/upriver communities on the Kuskokwim River. This has been especially evident over the last five years when there has been a limited harvestable surplus. The communities from Bethel and the surrounding area have harvested a disproportionate share of the Chinook. Currently there are no limits or reporting requirements for Chinook on the Kuskokwim. The increase in harvest at the mouth of the Kuskokwim results in not allowing enough Chinook to continue upriver to make escapement and provide a reasonable opportunity for those communities upriver of Bethel to meet their needs. The effect gets progressively more pronounced the further upriver a community is located.

A household permit system for Chinook should be instituted on the entire Kuskokwim River Drainage. This would allow a method to equitably distribute the harvestable surplus when it is forecast to be below the total ANS. Permits would give ADFG a method to allocate the forecast harvestable surplus equitably between all households. Such a permit system would also serve as a reporting mechanism for actual catch that would include all fishing households, not just those

available for voluntary interviews in October during the subsistence post-season surveys. This additional data would give better numbers on which to base management decisions.

PROPOSED BY: Stony-Holitna Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F15-043)
