

**ALASKA BOARD OF FISHERIES
ARCTIC / YUKON / KUSKOKWIM FINFISH
JANUARY 12–16, 2016**

PROPOSAL INDEX

Following is a list of proposals that will be considered at the above meeting sorted by general topic. A board committee roadmap will be developed and distributed prior to the meeting.

PROPOSAL NUMBER (55 proposals) SUBJECT

Kuskokwim Area Salmon and Herring (15 proposals)

Kuskokwim Salmon Management Plan (3 proposals)

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| 92 | Modify the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Plan to manage the king salmon subsistence fishery based on the Bethel Test Fishery. |
| 93 | Modify the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Plan to establish an inriver run goal of king salmon above the Bethel Test Fishery. |
| 94 | Establish an inriver run goal for the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Plan. |

Subsistence Salmon (6 proposals)

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| 95 | Create a Tier II subsistence king salmon fishery in the Kuskokwim River. |
| 96 | Separate the amounts necessary for subsistence use of king salmon into three parts on the Kuskokwim River. |
| 97 | Create a permitting system for king salmon subsistence fishing in the Kuskokwim River. |
| 98 | Establish descriptions of subsistence fishing sections for the Kuskokwim River during times of king salmon conservation. |
| 99 | Modify gear operation in the Kuskokwim River by limiting four-inch mesh subsistence gear to one gillnet per household. |
| 100 | Establish subsistence beach seine specifications in the Kuskokwim Area. |

Commercial Salmon (4 proposals)

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| 101 | Repeal Kuskokwim Area depth specifications for commercial gillnets greater than six-inch mesh. |
| 102 | Change gillnet mesh size from six inches or smaller to five and three-quarters inches or smaller in District 4 of the Kuskokwim Area. |
| 103 | Amend the Kuskokwim Area District 4 Salmon Management Plan to include District 5. |
| 104 | Increase the commercial fishing area in District 5 of the Kuskokwim Area. |

Sport Salmon (1 proposal)

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| 105 | Modify gear specifications to reduce king salmon harvest in the Kanektok and Arolik rivers. |
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Commercial Herring (1 proposal)

- 106 Extend the Nelson Island herring fishing district from Atrnak Point toward Cape Vancouver.

Yukon Area Salmon (22 proposals)

Management Plans (5 proposals)

- 107 Close the Yukon River summer chum salmon commercial fishery to protect king salmon.
- 108 Reduce management triggers in the Yukon River Summer Chum Salmon Management Plan based on the run size of summer chum salmon.
- 109 Modify the Yukon River Summer Chum Salmon Management Plan triggers.
- 110 Increase the commercial fishery threshold trigger in the Yukon River Drainage Fall Chum Salmon Management Plan.
- 111 Eliminate the use of GHs in the Yukon River King Salmon Management Plan.

Subsistence (10 proposals)

- 112 Allow all gear used in Yukon Area commercial fisheries to be allowed in Yukon Area subsistence fisheries.
- 113 Prohibit the use of drift gillnets in the Yukon Area subsistence fishery and in the Yukon Area commercial fishery.
- 114 Require subsistence salmon fishing permits in Yukon Area District 5 and set permit limits for king salmon during times of king salmon conservation.
- 115 Allow for the retention of king salmon less than 25 inches in length in Yukon Area fish wheel subsistence fisheries.
- 116 During times of salmon conservation in the Yukon Area, require fish wheels with live boxes to be manned and require immediate release of the specified salmon.
- 117 Prohibit the use of beach seines in the Yukon Area subsistence salmon fishery and in the Yukon River and Anvik River summer chum salmon commercial fisheries.
- 118 Establish specifications for a beach seine used for subsistence fishing in the Yukon Area.
- 119 Require live release of king salmon from subsistence beach seines during times of king salmon conservation in the Yukon Area.
- 120 Allow subsistence fall chum salmon fishing seven days per week in District 5 of the Yukon Area once a fall chum salmon commercial fishery is opened.
- 121 Expand the area of allowable subsistence drift gillnet fishing for chum salmon in Subdistrict 4-A of the Yukon Area.

Commercial (7 proposals)

- 122 Modify Yukon Area commercial set gillnet length specification to an aggregate length standard.
- 123 Further define commercial beach seine specifications for summer chum salmon in the Yukon Area.
- 124 Allow for six-inch or smaller mesh gillnets in the commercial salmon fishery in Yukon River District 6 by emergency order.
- 125 Establish gillnet gear provisions to allow a directed pink salmon commercial fishery in districts 1–3 of the Yukon Area.
- 126 Add purse seine gear as an allowable commercial salmon fishing gear to target summer chum salmon in districts 1–3 of the Yukon River during times of king salmon conservation.
- 127 Expand the commercial fishing area of Yukon Area District 1.
- 128 Extend commercial fishing three miles offshore and north to Point Romanof in District 1 of the Yukon Area.

Norton Sound-Port Clarence Area Salmon (6 proposals)

Subsistence (4 proposals)

- 129 In the Norton Sound-Port Clarence Area during times of conservation, require the return of a specified salmon species immediately to the water unharmed when beach seining.
- 130 Allow the restriction of gillnet mesh size during times of conservation for chum and king salmon in any portion of the Norton Sound-Port Clarence Area.
- 131 Increase subsistence fishing time with gillnets and beach seines in Subdistrict 1 of Norton Sound District.
- 132 Add cast net as a legal subsistence fishing gear and allow both dip net and cast net gear to be used in all subsistence fisheries in the Norton Sound-Port Clarence Area.

Commercial (1 proposal)

- 133 Allow the use of beach seines for commercial harvest of chum and pink salmon in Subdistricts 5 and 6 of the Norton Sound District during times of king salmon conservation.

Norton Sound/Yukon Area Boundary (1 proposal)

- 134 Change the boundary line separating the Norton Sound-Port Clarence Area and Yukon Area at Point Romanof in area and district descriptions.

AYK Resident Species (12 proposals)

Sport (6 proposals)

- 135 Prohibit the use of set lines in Grizzly and Jack lakes.
- 136 Allow only one fishing line per angler during the Fielding Lake winter fishery.

- 137 Allow the use of bait during the winter fishery on Fielding Lake.
- 138 Allow retention of Arctic grayling on the Chena River.
- 139 Update the Tanana River Area stocked waters regulation.
- 140 Repeal Yukon River Area rainbow trout regulations.

Subsistence (4 proposals)

- 141 Recognize rod and reel fishing as a legal means for subsistence fishing in all of the Kotzebue District.
- 142 Change the dates gillnet gear may be used in the South Fork and Middle Fork of the Koyukuk River from November 1 to June 30 to August 20 to June 30.
- 143 Reduce the bag and possession limit of northern pike in the Minto Flats Northern Pike Management Plan.
- 144 Allow the use of five and one-half inch mesh gillnets across an entire channel in portions of the Koyukuk River for the purpose of targeting northern pike.

Personal Use (1 proposal)

- 145 Repeal the regulation that prohibits the taking of northern pike in the Tanana River drainage personal use fishery.

Commercial (1 proposal)

- 146 Create a directed commercial fishery for cisco in Norton Sound or Port Clarence Districts.

**BOARD OF FISHERIES
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PROPOSAL 92 – 5 AAC 07.365. Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Plan. Modify the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Plan to manage the king salmon subsistence fishery based on the Bethel Test Fishery, as follows:

5 AAC 07.365(c)(2) is amended to add a new subparagraph (C) as follows:

(C) notwithstanding (A) and (B) of this section, when the preseason outlook is below 150,000 king salmon and taking into account recent run performance, the department shall manage the king salmon subsistence fishery conservatively and not open any subsistence salmon fishing periods until the approximate first 50% of the current king run has been determined to have passed the Bethel Test Fishery;

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Since 2010, the Kuskokwim River has experienced a decline in king salmon returns, with 2013 having the lowest total run and escapement on record, and 2014 seeing the implementation of unprecedented subsistence fishing restrictions for Kuskokwim Chinook salmon. In times of low run abundance, it becomes more difficult to ensure that adequate numbers of fish reach their spawning grounds and to provide enough fish for equitable distribution to subsistence users throughout the drainage. This proposal would close the subsistence salmon fishery until it has been determined that approximately 50% of the king salmon run has passed the Bethel Test Fishery.

PROPOSED BY: Orutsarmiut Native Council (HQ-F15-108)

PROPOSAL 93 – 5 AAC 07.365. Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Plan. Modify the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Plan to establish an inriver run goal of king salmon above the Bethel Test Fishery, as follows:

The BOF should establishment an In-River goal for Chinook salmon on the Kuskokwim River. The lower end of which is based on the established SEG, adjusted for uncertainty (85,000) and the addition of 10,000 fish for a total In-River goal of 95,000 Chinook above the BTF site.

5 AAC07.365. Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Plan is amended to:

(c) In the king salmon fishery,

Replace all occurrences in this section of the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Plan of: "drainage wide escapement goal", with "the established In-River Goal".

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Currently fisheries managers lack codified in-season management objectives to provide for reasonable opportunity

for the harvest of Chinook salmon in the middle/upper regions on the Kuskokwim River. Reasonable opportunity for subsistence harvest of Chinook salmon has not been provided for over a decade in these communities when taking into account that considerable more effort and expense has been required to meet basic subsistence needs. This has been especially evident over the last five years when ANS drainage-wide has not been met. Post season harvest data (1990 to 2011) shows that Bethel is harvesting a significantly greater proportion of Chinook than in the past, approximately a 5% per decade rate increase. Although the number of Chinook harvested per household (HH) in Bethel has remained relatively constant, the number of HH's has been rapidly increasing (about 50 HH's/per year), or roughly the equivalent of adding one new Village the size of Upper Kalskag to the Kuskokwim each year. Over this same period most villages in the middle and upper river harvest and number of HH's has remained constant or declined. What is not captured by the harvest statistics however is how much harder the villages in the middle and upper Kuskokwim have had to work, and resources they have expended just to remain constant, or slow the decline of harvest. The primary cause of this inequality is fundamentally due to lower densities of Chinook above Bethel, as a result of; low abundance, increased population growth of Bethel, no segregation of ANS by sub regions (i.e. lower, mid and upper-river), and more recently the adoption of the basin-wide SEG which allows for unrestricted subsistence harvest in the lower river even when abundance is well below historic means.

An appropriate in-season management goal that could increase the relative density of Chinook above Bethel is needed. The "tool" at the BOF's disposal to accomplish this is establishing an In-River Goal for Chinook salmon above the Bethel Test Fish (BTF) site. The current basin-wide SEG is 65,000 -120,000 Chinook, which correlates well with the BTF indices, however to account for uncertainty a management objective of 85,000 Chinook is typically used to ensure that the minimum escapement is met. The 25 year average of subsistence harvest has been approximately 81,000 Chinook for the entire drainage. Taking into account the increase in the proportional harvest at Bethel (5% per decade), over a 25 year period approximately 12.5% of the total harvest has been "reallocated" to Bethel, or the equivalent of about 10,000 Chinook. Total Chinook harvested by the middle and upper Kuskokwim Villages between 1990 and 2011 has declined by approximately 6,000 Chinook.

Through establishment of an in-river goal using the management objectives of 85,000 plus an additional 10,000 fish as the lower bounds of a goal, as measured by the BTF, managers would be more likely to meet minimum escapement, and increase the density of fish in the middle and upper river resulting in more equitable, reasonable opportunity for those communities.

As an alternative solution, and because the ANS for Chinook salmon on the Kuskokwim has not been met drainage-wide over the last five years, under AS 16.05.258. (b)(4)(B), "if the harvestable portion of the stock or population is not sufficient to provide a reasonable opportunity for subsistence uses, the appropriate board shall. . . , distinguish among subsistence users..." i.e., establish a Tier II permitting system. The Board acknowledged this issue last October with its acceptance of ACR #8, and the establishment of the Kuskokwim Subsistence Salmon Panel to explore the issue further along with possible solutions. Three BOF proposals were adopted by the BOF addressing gear type changes; regrettably they fall far short of

addressing the core issues raised in ACR#8, and in this proposal. If the issue of inequitable harvest opportunity is not resolved by the BOF state statute clearly directs the BOF to institute a Tier II system for the subsistence harvest of Chinook salmon on the Kuskokwim River.

PROPOSED BY: Kuskokwim Native Association (HQ-F15-089)

PROPOSAL 94 – 5 AAC 07.365. Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Plan. Establish an inriver run goal for the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Plan, as follows:

5 AAC 07.365. Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Plan is amended to read:

(c) In the king salmon fishery,
(?) establish an Inriver Run Goal of 120,000 to 218,000 Chinook salmon, which is the historical median escapement +/- 30% plus the proposed nested ANS for communities upstream of Bethel.

(A) This inriver Run Goal would result in a level of escapement that ranges from the upper end of the current escapement goal, to well above the current goal.

(B) This inriver Run Goal provides a level of subsistence harvest opportunity upstream of Bethel consistent with historical opportunity. The level of annual escapement that would result also would provide decades of sustainable subsistence and commercial fisheries in the Kuskokwim River.

(1) when the projected escapement of king salmon is below the drainage-wide escapement goal range, the commissioner shall, by emergency order, close the commercial, sport, and subsistence king salmon fisheries,

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Stony-Holitna Advisory Committee has submitted three separate proposals to use as tools in addressing this issue. The three proposals (see Proposals 96 and 97) would be most effectively considered as a group in sequential order with this being the second 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 lower end 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.

Establish an inriver goal at a specific point, the Bethel Test Fishery, to guide managers in allowing enough Chinook upriver to provide reasonable opportunity for the middle/upriver

communities. This river goal could be set as the historical (1976-2013) median Chinook salmon escapement plus the nested ANS for the communities upriver of Bethel.

PROPOSED BY: Stony-Holitna Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F15-042)

PROPOSAL 95 – 5 AAC 01.286. Customary and traditional subsistence uses of fish stocks and amounts necessary for subsistence uses; and 5 AAC 01.2xx. Tier II subsistence salmon fishing permits for the Kuskokwim River fishery. Create a Tier II subsistence king salmon fishery in the Kuskokwim River, as follows:

5 AAC 01.286(b) and 5 AAC 01.2xx NEW

Because available surpluses of Kuskokwim River Chinook salmon remain very low, and for a sustained period of time have not been sufficient to provide a reasonable opportunity to meet subsistence needs, the Board should designate Kuskokwim River Chinook salmon stocks as a Tier II fishery, as specified in AS 16.05.258(b)(4) or implement an alternate system which will effectively ensure an equitable distribution of any harvestable surpluses throughout the drainage in periods when amount necessary for subsistence (ANS) cannot be met (i.e. community permits or quotas). AS 16.05.258 states that “if the harvestable portion of the stock or population is not sufficient to provide a reasonable opportunity for subsistence uses, the appropriate board shall” [emphasis added] establish a system that distinguishes among subsistence users. Such a system, referred to as “Tier II,” gives priority to users based on a set of clear criteria including: 1) customary dependence, 2) proximity to the stock or population and 3) availability of alternative resources (AS 16.05.258(b)(4)(B)). Tier II has been applied in the past by the BOF to the Nome Subdistrict chum salmon subsistence fishery and in a number of cases by the Board of Game.

Given the clear language in statute requiring action on the part of the Board, if the Board elects not to take action they may be failing to fairly distribute limited harvestable surpluses of Kuskokwim River Chinook salmon in years when ANS is not being met and may be in violation of AS 16.05.258(b)(4).

The core of this proposal was the subject of an 2014 BOF ACR which was accepted by the BOF by a 7-0 vote and considered at their October 2014 work session, but did not result in any of the requested actions. [See **ACR #8**: “Subdivide Kuskokwim River king salmon ANS by geographic area and allocate Kuskokwim River king salmon subsistence harvest under a Tier II system (5 AAC 01.286(b) and 5 AAC 01.2xx NEW)”].

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Kuskokwim River Chinook salmon stocks are currently in an extended period of very depressed runs. With severely depressed runs and all Alaska residents qualifying as subsistence users, it has not been possible for fishery managers to provide fishing opportunity for all users without impacting escapement needs essential to rebuilding the stocks. The minimum ANS (5 AAC 01.286) for Kuskokwim River Chinook salmon (67,200 to 109,800) has not been achieved for the past five consecutive years. The 2014 total harvest as estimated by ADFG was 11,762—more than 55,000 salmon below the bottom of the established ANS range.

Subsistence users in 26 communities spread out along the length of the River customarily harvest Chinook salmon for subsistence. In recent years, when there has been limited harvest opportunity – but well below the ANS range, middle river and upriver users in many communities assert that the distribution of harvest, and reasonable opportunity, has not been equitably shared throughout the drainage with disproportionate harvest opportunities provided to lower river harvesters.

PROPOSED BY: Grant Fairbanks (HQ-F15-097)

PROPOSAL 96 – 5 AAC 01.286. Customary and traditional subsistence uses of fish stocks and amounts necessary for subsistence uses. Separate the amounts necessary for subsistence use of king salmon into three parts on the Kuskokwim River, as follows:

5 AAC 01.286 is amended to read:

5 AAC 01.286. Customary and traditional subsistence uses of fish stocks and amounts necessary for subsistence uses

(a) The Alaska Board of Fisheries (board) finds that the following fish stocks are customarily and traditionally taken or used for subsistence:

...

(b) The board finds that the following amounts of fish are reasonably necessary for subsistence uses:

(1) 67,200 - 109,800 king salmon in the Kuskokwim River drainage, **including**

(A) 22,400-36,600 in the Kuskokwim River from the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge boundary at the mouth of the Kuskokwim (a line between 59° 59.958' N, 162° 30.458' W and 59° 59.945' N and 162° 11.154' W) upstream to Graveyard Point.

(B) 22,400-36,600 in the Kuskokwim River from Graveyard Point to the Y below Kwethluk at the mouth of Kuskokwaq Slough; and

(C) 22,400-36,600 in the Kuskokwim River from the Y below Kwethluk at the mouth of Kuskokwaq Slough to the headwaters;

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Stony-Holitna Advisory Committee has submitted three separate proposals to use as tools in addressing this issue. The three proposals (see Proposals 94 and 97) would be most effectively considered as a group in sequential order with this being the first 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 lower end 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.

Using the present ANS number, divide the ANS into three equal parts, a nested ANS, based roughly on current subsistence harvest in these three portions of the river. One third to be below Bethel, one third to encompass the Bethel area and one third to be above Bethel. These proportions are based on subsistence harvest data both from a 5 year average and a 24 year average, with little or no change over that time span. This would give the managers a formal target to aim for in each part of the river. Managers have a broad spectrum of management tools available to them to be used to help each ANS area achieve an equal portion of the harvest. The goal is to strive for equal harvest in each ANS area. This may be achieved by using different management options in each area. Notwithstanding this goal, it is acknowledged that ANS is most useful as a post-season tool to be used to adjust management approaches for the coming year.

PROPOSED BY: Stony-Holitna Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F15-041)

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)

PROPOSAL 98 – 5 AAC 01.255. Description of districts and subsections. Establish descriptions of subsistence fishing sections for the Kuskokwim River during times of king salmon conservation, as follows:

5 AAC 01.255 is amended to read:

5 AAC 01.255. Description of districts and subsections. (a) Districts and subdistricts are as described in 5 AAC 07.200.

(b) During times of king salmon conservation, the Kuskokwim River may be divided into the following sections by emergency order:

(1) Section 1: from a line from the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge boundary at the mouth of the Kuskokwim River at 59° 59.96' N. lat., 162° 30.46' W. long. to the confluence of the Johnson River and Kuskokwim River at 59° 59.95' N. lat., 162° 11.15' W. long.;

(2) Section 2: from the confluence of the Johnson River and Kuskokwim River to a line between ADF&G regulatory markers located approximately one-half mile upstream of the Tuluksak River mouth;

(3) Section 3: from a line between ADF&G regulatory markers located approximately one-half mile upstream of the Tuluksak River mouth to a line between ADF&G regulatory markers at the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge boundary near Aniak;

(4) Section 4: from the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge boundary near Aniak to a line between ADF&G regulatory markers located downstream of the Holitna River mouth;

(5) Section 5: from a line between ADF&G regulatory markers located downstream of the Holitna River mouth to the headwaters of the Kuskokwim River.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The department has been dividing the Kuskokwim River into five sections by emergency order to manage the subsistence fishery during times of king salmon conservation. There has been a lot of confusion regarding the descriptions or definitions of these areas. This proposal seeks to establish clear definitions in regulation.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F15-012)

PROPOSAL 99 – 5 AAC 01.270. Lawful gear and gear specifications and operation. Modify gear operation in the Kuskokwim River by limiting four-inch mesh subsistence gear to one gillnet per household, as follows:

Amend 5 AAC 01.270 is amended to read:

When 4” mesh restrictions are in place for the purpose of king salmon conservation, there is an additional limitation of only one (1) net per household;

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Since 2010, the Kuskokwim River has experienced a decline in king salmon returns, with 2013 having the lowest total run and escapement on record, and 2014 seeing the implementation of unprecedented subsistence fishing restrictions for Kuskokwim Chinook salmon. A 4” mesh, 60’ net allowance was made in order to give people an opportunity to fish for other resident species to have some opportunity for “fresh fish on the table”, but was not meant to be used for the targeting of king salmon. It has been observed and reported on numerous occasions that some have abused this opportunity by having multiple (2-5) legal nets in the water to increase their chances of “incidental” take of king salmon during their run. At fisheries meetings this winter many resident fishermen also expressed great concern for perceived increase in mortality to kings from encountering the greatly increased numbers of 4” inch mesh nets in the water.

PROPOSED BY: Orutsararmiut Native Council (HQ-F15-107)

PROPOSAL 100 – 5 AAC 01.270. Lawful gear and gear specifications and operation. Establish subsistence beach seine specifications in the Kuskokwim Area, as follows:

5 AAC 01.270 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

(p) A beach seine may not exceed 50 fathoms in length or 100 meshes in depth. Seine mesh size may not exceed three and one-half inches stretched measure.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Beach seines are legal gear under current subsistence fishing regulations, though there are no specifications. Therefore, any combination of net length, depth, and mesh size could be operated within the Kuskokwim Area as a beach seine. Under current regulations, a very large or very long beach seine could potentially capture king salmon. Because of king salmon conservation concerns, it is prudent to ensure beach seine gear will not cause king salmon mortality. This will provide clarification and set maximum allowable gear specifications for beach seines in the Kuskokwim Area.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F15-021)

PROPOSAL 101 – 5 AAC 07.331. Gillnet specifications and operations. Repeal Kuskokwim Area depth specifications for commercial gillnets greater than six-inch mesh, as follows:

5 AAC 07.331(b) is amended to read:

(b) The maximum depth of gillnets is as follows:

(1) gillnets with six-inch or smaller mesh may not be more than 45 meshes in depth;

(2) **repealed** / / / [GILLNETS WITH GREATER THAN SIX-INCH MESH MAY NOT BE MORE THAN 35 MESHES IN DEPTH].

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Within the Kuskokwim Area commercial fisheries, only gillnets with six-inch or smaller mesh are considered legal gear. Since gillnets with larger than six-inch mesh are not legal gear in the Kuskokwim Area commercial fisheries, there is no need to have a mesh depth regulation specified for that mesh size. The suggested change would simplify the codified regulations and remove unnecessary regulatory language.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F15-023)

PROPOSAL 102 – 5 AAC 07.331. Gillnet specifications and operations. Change gillnet mesh size from six inches or smaller to five and three-quarters inches or smaller in District 4 of the Kuskokwim Area, as follows:

5 AAC 07.331. Gillnet specifications and operations is amended to readL:

(d)

(2) salmon may be taken only with gillnets of **5 3/4-inch** [6-inch] or smaller mesh.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Due to the closed and highly regulatory restrictions on the harvest of the Chinook salmon in District W-4, commercial fisherman, have foregone the opportunity to harvest the more abundant sockeye and chum salmon. Sockeye and chum salmon runs overlap the Chinook salmon run which makes it a challenge to minimize the commercial harvest of the more abundant species. Additionally, the nature and design of the commercial salmon fishery in the “W-4” district makes it an incredible

challenge to utilize alternative gear to avoid and minimize the harvest of Chinook salmon. Many of the commercial fisherman of District W-4 (Quinhagak) depend on the commercial fishery as their sole source of income for the few short months it is open. By reducing the mesh size from 6 inches to 5 3/4 inches, this would allow commercial fisherman the opportunity to harvest sockeye and chum salmon during their peak run timing while providing the Chinook salmon the opportunity to escape during times of conservation. Should the Chinook salmon conservation be lifted, then so should the mesh size reduction, allowing commercial fisherman in district W-4 to go back up to 6-inch or less in mesh size.

(Editor note: 5 AAC 07.331(d) also addresses District 5.)

PROPOSED BY: Native Village of Kwinhagak (EF-C15-107)

PROPOSAL 103 – 5 AAC 07.367. District 4 Salmon Management Plan. Amend the Kuskokwim Area District 4 Salmon Management Plan to include District 5, as follows:

5 AAC 07.367 is amended to read:

5 AAC 07.367. District 4 **and 5** Salmon Management Plan. (a) The objective of the District 4 **and 5** Salmon Management Plan is to maintain a level of sustained yield which will provide for subsistence needs, the long-term economic health of the commercial and sport fishing industries, and recreational opportunities, in the **districts** [DISTRICT] and freshwater systems flowing into the **districts** [DISTRICT].

(b) The District 4 commercial salmon fishery is to open before June 16.

(c) When the catch of king salmon in the commercial fishery is less than 50 percent of the catch of king and sockeye salmon combined, the department shall manage, to the extent practicable, the commercial salmon fishery based on the strength of the sockeye salmon return.

(d) Commercial salmon fishing periods are established by emergency order. The department shall allow at least one fishing period per week, unless a severe conservation problem develops.

(e) When a closure of the commercial salmon fishery is required, the department shall decide, on or before the 10th day of the closure, whether to close the sport fishery to the taking of the species of the biological concern and whether additional management actions on the sport fishery are needed.

(f) During times of king salmon conservation, the commercial fishery in District 5 may be restricted to that portion of Goodnews Bay east of a line from ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately two miles south on the seaward side of the entrance of Goodnews Bay to an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately two miles north on the seaward side of the entrance of Goodnews Bay and west of a line from Big Beluga to Little Beluga.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Currently the department uses elements of the *District 4 Salmon Management Plan* to manage District 5 salmon resources for sustained yield. Including applicable aspects of the *District 4 Salmon Management Plan* to manage

District 5 will make fisheries management strategies clearer to fishermen in District 5. The District 5 fishing area has been reduced in the past by emergency order to conserve king salmon while directing the harvest at sockeye salmon.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F15-022)

PROPOSAL 104 – 5 AAC 07.200. Fishing districts, subdistricts, and sections. Increase the commercial fishing area in District 5 of the Kuskokwim Area, as follows:

5 AAC 07.200(d) is amended to read:

(d) District 5 consists of that portion of Goodnews Bay east of a line from an ADF&G regulatory marker located at Red Mountain, approximately 3–5 [TWO] miles south of the seaward side of the entrance [MOUTH] of Goodnews Bay to an ADF&G regulatory marker located at Qengallek Point, approximately 3–4 [TWO] miles north of the seaward side of the entrance of Goodnews Bay and west of a line between the mouth of Ukfigag Creek at 59° 04.17' N. lat., 161° 36' W. long., and the mouth of the Tunulik River at 59° 08' N. lat., 161° 37' W. long."

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Extend the line on the seaward side of the district. When the fishery opens during the summer there are lot of fishermen that comes down to Goodnews Bay District from other villages to fish and with the influx of fishermen there is a lack of space to fish, especially during low tides. The inside of the Bay shrinks to more than half of its size since most of the Bay becomes mudflats and most of it becomes very shallow and what little area of deep enough water to fish in, it always becomes congested creating sometimes tensions between the fishermen and the only option is to go outside of the Bay to fish and even outside with more boats from other villages there is lack of space to fish since it would be impracticable to fish very close to the other boats.

PROPOSED BY: Peter Julius, Native Village of Goodnews Bay (EF-C15-036)

PROPOSAL 105 – 5 AAC 71.010. Seasons and bag, possession, annual, and size limits for the Kuskokwim - Goodnews Area. Modify gear specifications to reduce king salmon harvest in the Kanektok and Arolik rivers, as follows:

5 AAC 71.010. Seasons and bag, possession, annual, and size limits for the Kuskokwim - Goodnews Area is amended to read:

Reduce the sport fishing gear sizes to no more than 9-weight for fly fishing rods, no more than 200-grains for fishing lines, and no more than 10-feet for sink tips on fishing lines for the Kanektok and Arolik Rivers.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Chinook salmon stocks in the Kanektok and Arolik Rivers have experienced a state of decline in the recent years

resulting in harvest restrictions in the Chinook salmon sport fishery. By reducing the size of their gear during the Chinook salmon season, sport fisherman will decrease their chances of harvesting Chinook salmon. Chinook salmon are an important staple food for many of the indigenous people of Quinhagak who rely on the Kanektok and Arolik River's Chinook salmon runs.

PROPOSED BY: Native Village of Kwinhagak (EF-C15-108)

PROPOSAL 106 – 5 AAC 27.875. Description of Kuskokwim Area districts. Extend the Nelson Island herring fishing district from Atrnak Point toward Cape Vancouver, as follows:

5 AAC 27.875(c) is amended to read:

(c) The Nelson Island District consists of the waters north of the latitude of Chinigyak Cape (60° 27' N lat.) and east of the longitude of **Arriat (approximately half a mile (1/2) east from Cape Vancouver and approximately 7–8 miles west of Umkumiut), [ATRNAK POINT (165° 15' W long.) (APPROXIMATELY TWO MILES WEST OF UMKUMIUT),]** and all waters north of the latitude of Talurarevuk Point (60° 35' N lat.) and south of the latitude of the southernmost tip of Chinit Point (60° 36' N lat.) and east of the 165° 30' W long., and all waters of the latitude of the northernmost tip of Chinit Point (60° 37' N lat.) and south of the latitude of the southeastern most tip of KIgigak Island (60° 49' N lat.) and east of 165 of the°30' W long.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Extend the line westward from Atrnak Point toward Cape Vancouver. Early on during the first opening of each openings most of the herrings are within the closed area between Atrnak Point and Cape Vancouver. The reason behind the extension is so that the fishermen would be able to take advantage of the herring with better roe content and less spawn outs.

PROPOSED BY: Peter Julius (EF-C15-102)

PROPOSAL 107 – 5 AAC 05.362. Yukon River Summer Chum Salmon Management Plan. Close the Yukon River summer chum salmon commercial fishery to protect king salmon, as follows:

5 AAC 05.362 is amended to read:

No commercial openings on summer chum run in Yukon River as a means of protecting king run.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? At issue here the Tanana Rampart Manley Fish and Game Advisory Committee felt that while they support reasonable and sustainable commercial harvests they felt that management was unable to say no to the extreme pressures by commercial interests to have summer chum commercial openings and protect king salmon at the same time. Corruption of the pulse protection principle to not protect the last main

pulses of king salmon in order to allow commercial chum fishing sooner is an example. Members also pointed out regulations passed (fish wheel live box use) and management bowing to pressure to consider things such as drift seining and Board of Fisheries passing of beach seining and live box fishing for summer chum while releasing kings caught in same gear.

Basically members felt that until time can be found to deal properly with these issues the best move would be to stop all commercial summer chum fishing.

PROPOSED BY: Tanana Rampart Manley Fish and Game Advisory Committee

(EF-C15-023)

PROPOSAL 108 – 5 AAC 05.362. Yukon River Summer Chum Salmon Management Plan.

Reduce management triggers in the Yukon River Summer Chum Salmon Management Plan based on the run size of summer chum salmon, as follows:

We suggest that:

1. Subsistence fisheries should be managed below the low end of the BEG range, 600,000 salmon, so that no less than 400,000 salmon are allowed to spawn;
2. The commercial exploitation rate shall be 50% of the commercially available harvestable surplus of runs between 700,000 and 800,000; and
3. The commercial exploitation rate shall be up to 100% of the commercially available harvestable surplus of runs in excess of 800,000.

Suggested changes to the Yukon River Summer Chum Salmon Management Plan follows:

5 AAC 05.362. Yukon River Summer Chum Salmon Management Plan

(b) When the projected run size of summer chum salmon is **400,000** [600,000] fish or less, the commissioner shall, by emergency order, close the...

(c) When the projected run size of summer chum salmon is more than **400,000** [600,000] fish, but not more than **600,000** [700,000] fish,

(1) the commissioner shall close, by emergency order, the commercial, sport, and personal use directed summer chum salmon fisheries;

(2) the department shall manage the subsistence directed summer chum salmon fishery to achieve drainage-wide escapement of no less than **400,000** [600,000] summer chum salmon, except that, if indicators show that individual escapement goals within a district, subdistrict, or portion of a district or subdistrict will be met, the commissioner may open, by emergency order, a less restrictive directed subsistence summer chum fishery in that district, subdistrict, or portion of a district or subdistrict.

(d) When the projected run size of summer chum salmon is more than **600,000** [700,000] fish, but not more than **700,000** [1,000,000] fish,...

(e) Notwithstanding (d) of this section, when the projected run size of chum salmon is more than **700,000** [900,000] fish, but not more than **800,000** [1,000,000] fish, the commissioner may, by emergency order, open a drainagewide commercial fishery to harvest up to 50,000 fish above

the run size of **700,000** [900,000] chum salmon distributed by district or subdistrict in proportion to the guideline harvest levels established in (g) of this section.

(f) When the projected run size of summer chum salmon is more than **800,000** [1,000,000] fish, the commissioner may open, by emergency order, a drainagewide commercial fishery with the harvestable surplus distributed by district or subdistrict in proportion to the guideline harvest levels established in (g) of this section.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) recently completed a Biological Escapement Goal (BEG) analysis for Yukon River summer chum salmon. Based on that analysis, ADF&G may establish a BEG range for the entire Yukon River drainage of 600,000 to 1,000,000 salmon. The current Yukon River Summer Chum Salmon Management Plan was based on an implied drainage-wide escapement above Yukon Sonar project of at least 1,000,000 salmon. At that time, this implied escapement goal was based on the fact that half of the summer chum salmon passing the Yukon Sonar project site were destined to the Anvik River and that the established BEG for the Anvik River was point estimate of 500,000. At that time also, ADF&G assumed that productivity for the non-Anvik River stocks within the Yukon River drainage was probably similar to the Anvik River, so escapement to that portion of the drainage above the Yukon Sonar site should be similar.

Therefore, we ask the BOF to critically examine the current summer chum management plan and alter the trigger points in relation to the newly established drainage-wide summer chum salmon BEG, with consideration not to burden the subsistence fishery with Maximum Sustained Yield (MSY) management in years of low runs. Note that the strategy that allows the subsistence fishery to harvest summer chum salmon below the established BEG does not alter the trigger points that are associated with the commercial fishery.

Since there will likely be a new drainage-wide escapement goal for summer chum salmon, the management plan needs to be modified accordingly. We suggest that because Yukon River summer chum salmon have good production at low levels of escapement, subsistence harvests should be allowed to occur when runs are projected to provide for the escapements less than the lower end of the BEG. Note that there hasn't been an escapement below 400,000 salmon in recorded history, but escapements within the 400,000 to 500,000 range have produced well. For example, the estimated escapement of 486,000 salmon in 2000 produced an estimated 750,000 salmon, while the estimated escapement of 423,000 salmon in 2001, the lowest escapement recorded, produced a record 5.1M salmon, with an associated return per spawner (R/S) of 11.8, which is the also the highest on record. The only other escapement near the 600,000 lower end of the BEG range occurred in 1990 with an escapement of 622,000 salmon that produced the third highest return on record at 3.2M salmon, with a R/S of 4.9, which ranks second.

BEG-based management, on the average, is expected to produce MSY 90% of the time. We believe that when low runs occur (<600,000 salmon), management of the subsistence fishery to the attainment of escapements within the BEG is not in the best interest of the state. We believe that closing subsistence fisheries when runs are projected to be between 400,000 and 600,000 manages the stock for an expected MSY 4 or 5 years in the future on the backs of the subsistence fishers, which is unnecessary. The people of the Yukon River, particularly the people of the Lower Yukon Area, are extremely dependent on the summer chum salmon to sustain them

through the winter. It is, and always has been, the major and most important salmon species to for food. In our opinion, denying people the food they need because of MSY management is totally and absolutely wrong. Summer chum salmon subsistence fisheries of the Lower Yukon Area are necessary for the people's food security. The state should not be managing for future MSY when runs are below the low end of the BEG. I also note that in 2000 and 2001, ADF&G was reluctant to close the subsistence fisheries even though it was obvious inseason that the escapement target in the summer chum salmon management plan was not going to be achieved.

Strictly speaking, with an assumed subsistence harvest of 100,000 summer chum salmon, and in consideration of the established BEG, commercial fishing should be able to harvest the surplus over a run projected in excess of 700,000 salmon. However, we realize that the subsistence fishery may take more summer chum salmon because of the reduced king salmon subsistence harvest and that projections may not always be accurate. Therefore, we suggest that, similar to the present summer chum management plan, an exploitation rate of 50% be applied to the run between 700,000 and 800,000 salmon, with the possibility of full commercial exploitation on the commercially-available surplus for runs projected in excess of 800,000 salmon. This management strategy allows a commercial harvest to occur when runs are a full 200,000 fish less than the current management trigger point of 900,000 salmon. This change in the management plan will allow some income for commercial fishers when runs are lower than the current management plan triggers and will also foster maintaining commercial markets for the unique chum salmon of the Yukon River. Of course, we realize and expect that escapements should and will fall within the BEG, commensurate with run size. However, we also believe that ADF&G should do everything in their power to eliminate escapements in excess of 1.8M salmon. No escapements over 1.8M salmon have replaced themselves and usually have detrimental repercussions on the productivity of the stock.

Two other considerations should be discussed by the BOF regarding the summer chum salmon management plan: 1. Summer chum salmon subsistence harvests will probably fall below the assumed 100,000 salmon when more kings are taken for subsistence in the future, thereby eliminating that need for a buffer; and 2. The inability of the commercial fishery to efficiently harvest the commercial surplus available when king conservation strategies are in place, provides an additional buffer to escapement and subsistence needs. For example, in 2013 an estimated 1,487,000 summer chum salmon were available for harvest in Districts 1 and 2 of the Yukon Area. Actual commercial harvest was only 379,000 salmon, or about 25% of the allocation

PROPOSED BY: Kwik'pak Fisheries (EF-C15-123)

PROPOSAL 109 – 5 AAC 05.362. Yukon River Summer Chum Salmon Management Plan.
Modify Yukon River Summer Chum Salmon Management Plan triggers, as follows:

5 AAC 05.362(a)–(f) are amended as follows:

(a) The objective of this management plan is to provide the department with guidelines to manage for the sustained yield of Yukon River summer chum salmon. The department shall use the best available data, including preseason run projections, test fishing indices, age and sex composition, subsistence and commercial harvest reports, and passage estimates from

escapement monitoring projects to assess the run size for the purpose of implementing this plan. **Management of the summer chum salmon fisheries may be affected during times of king salmon conservation.**

(b) When the projected run size of summer chum salmon is 600,000 fish or less, [THE COMMISSIONER SHALL, BY EMERGENCY ORDER CLOSE THE]

(1) **the commissioner shall close, by emergency order, the** commercial, sport, and personal use directed summer chum salmon fisheries;

(2) **the department may restrict or close the** subsistence summer chum salmon fisheries, except that, if indicators show an individual escapement goal in a district, subdistrict, or portion of a district or subdistrict will be met, the commissioner may open, by emergency order, a directed subsistence summer chum fishery in that district, subdistrict, or portion of a district or subdistrict.

(c) When the projected run size of summer chum salmon is more than 600,000 fish, but not more than **750,000** [700,000] fish,

(1) the commissioner shall close, by emergency order, the commercial, sport, and personal use directed summer chum salmon fisheries;

(2) the department **may restrict** [SHALL MANAGE] the subsistence [DIRECTED] summer chum salmon fishery [TO ACHIEVE DRAINAGEWIDE ESCAPEMENT OF NO LESS THAN 600,000 SUMMER CHUM SALMON], except that, if indicators show that individual escapement goals within a district, subdistrict, or portion of a district or subdistrict will be met, the commissioner may open, by emergency order, a less restrictive directed subsistence summer chum fishery in that district, subdistrict, or portion of a district or subdistrict;

(3) if indicators show that individual escapement goals within a district, subdistrict, or portion of a district or subdistrict will be met, the commissioner may open, by emergency order, a summer chum fishery for commercial, sport, or personal use fishing in that district, subdistrict or portion of a district or subdistrict.

(d) **Repealed** / / [WHEN THE PROJECTED RUN SIZE OF SUMMER CHUM SALMON IS MORE THAN 700,000 FISH, BUT NOT MORE THAN 1,000,000 FISH,

(1) THE COMMISSIONER MAY OPEN, BY EMERGENCY ORDER, A SUBSISTENCE FISHERY WITH FISHING SEASONS AND PERIODS AS SPECIFIED IN 5 AAC 05.360(d);

(2) AND IF INDICATORS SHOW THAT INDIVIDUAL ESCAPEMENT GOALS WITHIN A DISTRICT, SUBDISTRICT, OR PORTION OF A DISTRICT OR SUBDISTRICT WILL BE MET, THE COMMISSIONER MAY OPEN, BY EMERGENCY ORDER, A SUMMER CHUM FISHERY FOR COMMERCIAL, SPORT, OR PERSONAL USE FISHING IN THAT DISTRICT, SUBDISTRICT OR PORTION OF A DISTRICT OR SUBDISTRICT].

(e) **Repealed** / / [NOTWITHSTANDING (d) OF THIS SECTION, WHEN THE PROJECTED RUN SIZE OF CHUM SALMON IS MORE THAN 900,000 FISH, BUT NOT MORE THAN 1,000,000 FISH, THE COMMISSIONER MAY, BY EMERGENCY ORDER, OPEN A DRAINAGEWIDE COMMERCIAL FISHERY TO HARVEST UP TO 50,000 FISH ABOVE THE RUN SIZE OF 900,000 CHUM SALMON DISTRIBUTED BY DISTRICT OR SUBDISTRICT IN PROPORTION TO THE GUIDELINE HARVEST LEVELS ESTABLISHED IN (g) OF THIS SECTION].

(f) When the projected run size of summer chum salmon is more than **750,000** [1,000,000] fish, the commissioner may open, by emergency order, a drainagewide commercial fishery

managed to achieve escapements within the established drainagewide escapement goal range of 600,000 – 1,000,000 summer chum salmon. The targeted harvest of the surplus will be [WITH THE HARVESTABLE SURPLUS] distributed by district or subdistrict in proportion to the guideline harvest levels established in (g) of this section.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Yukon River summer chum salmon management plan originated in 1990 with abundance and escapement triggers based upon historical estimates of abundance and potential escapement needs. The department is developing a Yukon River drainagewide escapement goal of 600,000 – 1,000,000 summer chum salmon. Therefore, some modifications of the summer chum salmon plan are appropriate at this time. The summer chum salmon escapement goal is based on a stock-recruit analysis aimed at maximizing sustainable yield in the fishery. However, escapements as low as 400,000 summer chum salmon have yielded a sustainable population. The amount necessary for subsistence (ANS) for summer chum salmon on the Yukon River is 83,500 – 142,192 fish. Recent subsistence harvests from 2010–2014 have ranged from 88,000 – 127,000 summer chum salmon. Given that escapements as low as 400,000 have yielded a sustainable population, there could be some flexibility for allowing subsistence opportunity at a run size at below 600,000. There is increasing demand for summer chum salmon to supplement declining king salmon subsistence harvests on the Yukon River. This proposal seeks to provide the department flexibility to provide a subsistence harvest when the summer chum salmon run size is at or near 600,000 fish. Other uses, primarily the commercial fishery, would be allowed commensurate with the new escapement goal and providing for the subsistence priority.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F15-028)

PROPOSAL 110 – 5 AAC 01.249. Yukon River Drainage Fall Chum Salmon Management Plan. Increase the commercial fishery threshold trigger in the Yukon River Drainage Fall Chum Salmon Management Plan, as follows:

5 AAC 01.249. Yukon River Drainage Fall Chum Salmon Management Plan (3)(C)(5) is amended to read:

(5) when the projected run size is more than **600,000** [500,000] chum salmon, the commissioner may, by emergency order, open and close, commercial fisheries drainage-wide and manage the fisheries to achieve escapements within the established drainage-wide escapement goal range of 300,000 - 600,000 chum salmon; the targeted harvest of the surplus will be distributed by district or subdistrict proportional to the guideline harvest range established in 5 AAC 05.365; the department shall distribute the harvest levels below the low end of the guideline harvest range by district or subdistrict proportional to the midpoint of the guideline harvest range;

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? When projected run estimates for Yukon River fall chum salmon are 600,000 or less, second pulse protection of fall chum would be put in place with no commercial fishing allowed in Districts Y1 through Y5 so

that sufficient fall chum salmon will move upriver to meet subsistence needs and escapement goals.

Fall chum is the only salmon available to the upper Yukon River communities since Chinook salmon declines and closure of all directed Chinook harvest projected for the foreseeable future. Fall chum salmon is now needed to provide food for Yukon River communities more than ever before. Protections are needed to ensure commercial harvest of fall chum in the lower Yukon River does not prevent subsistence families from meeting their harvest needs in the upper river. This proposal is to increase the threshold at which the fall chum salmon commercial fishery can open from projected run size of 500,000 chum salmon to 600,000 chum salmon.

What would happen if nothing is changed? The current fall chum salmon commercial fishery threshold trigger of 500,000 is the lowest it has ever been in regulation. While currently the fall chum returns have been strong, this may not continue to be the case in the future and regulations take a long time to go into effect to be responsive and thus require proactive conservation management. If the regulation is not changed the uncertainty of projected run size could cause circumstances again in the future where a commercial fishery is prosecuted and runs do not return as expected, causing escapement goals to not be met and also place all the burden of limiting harvest on subsistence communities in the upper river (as well as commercial and sport fisheries in District 5) in order to meet escapement goals. Fall chum salmon is relied on more heavily now by subsistence communities in times of low Chinook returns and any restriction to subsistence fall chum salmon harvest caused by overharvest in the commercial fisheries causes great hardship to subsistence communities in the upper Yukon River that have no other salmon options.

This commercial fishery threshold increase will help build in protection for uncertain run size projections so that more fall chum can move upriver where they are necessary to meet increasing subsistence needs in the upper river prior to any accidental overharvest in the lower river by missed projections and still will allow for the commercial opportunity for the lower river. Increasing the projected run size commercial fishing threshold trigger will be a tool for managers to assure escapement goals are achieved and subsistence needs are met in the upper river Yukon River districts prior to removal of fall chum salmon from the system before fully knowing the run strength. The example is that if fall chum salmon don't actually return in the numbers that were projected, but a commercial fishery is already prosecuted in the lower Yukon districts then subsistence fishing in district Y5 has to be restricted in order to meet escapement goals.

PROPOSED BY: Eastern Interior Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council
(EF-C15-125)

PROPOSAL 111 – 5 AAC 05.360. Yukon River King Salmon Management Plan. Eliminate the use of GHGs in the Yukon River King Salmon Management Plan, as follows:

We recommend the elimination of the GHG in numbers of fish and just use the associated percentages that are already in regulation.

5 AAC 05.360. Yukon River King Salmon Management Plan

(b) The department shall manage commercial fishing as follows:

(2) the department shall manage the Yukon River commercial king salmon fishery [FOR A GUIDELINE HARVEST RANGE OF 67,350 - 129,150 KING SALMON, DISTRIBUTED AS FOLLOWS:

(A) DISTRICTS 1 AND 2: 60,000 - 120,000 KING SALMON;

(B) DISTRICT 3: 1,800 - 2,200 KING SALMON;

(C) DISTRICT 4: 2,250 - 2,850 KING SALMON;

(D) DISTRICT 5:

(i) SUBDISTRICT 5-B AND 5-C: 2,400 - 2,800 KING SALMON;

(ii) SUBDISTRICT 5-D: 300 - 500 KING SALMON; AND

(E) DISTRICT 6: 600 - 800 KING SALMON ;

(3) WHEN THE PROJECTED KING SLAMON HARVEST RANGE FOR DISTRICT 1 - 6 COMBINED IS BELOW THE LOW END OF THE HARVEST LEVEL FROM ZERO TO 67,350 FISH, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ALLOCATE] **by allocating** the commercial harvest available by percentage for each district as follows:

(A) Districts 1 and 2: 89.1 percent;

(B) District 3: 2.7 percent;

(C) District 4: 3.3 percent;

(D) Subdistricts 5-B and 5-C: 3.6 percent;

(E) Subdistrict 5-D: 0.4 percent; and

(F) District 6: 0.9 percent.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Yukon River commercial king salmon Guideline Harvest Ranges (GHR), in numbers of fish, are meaningless. They should be deleted because they do not represent expected commercial harvest of Yukon king salmon. Originally, they were established so that fishers could have some expectation of the harvest within a district or subdistrict. Commercial harvests of king salmon have not been within the guideline harvest level since 1999. The last directed king salmon commercial fishery occurred in 2007. The state prohibited the sale of incidentally caught king salmon from the directed summer chum salmon fishery in 2009, and from 2010 through 2014. Sale of incidentally caught king salmon caught in the fall season fisheries was prohibited since 2012. Drainage-wide commercial harvests of equal to or more than 67,350 king salmon are highly unlikely for the foreseeable future. Therefore it does not make any sense to have this GHR, expressed in numbers of fish, as an expectation in regulation.

We suggest using the percentages in regulation to distribute any commercially-harvestable surplus by district and or subdistrict.

PROPOSED BY: Kwik'pak Fisheries

(EF-C15-124)

PROPOSAL 112 – 5 AAC 01.220. Lawful gear and gear specifications. Allow all gear used in Yukon Area commercial fisheries to be allowed in Yukon Area subsistence fisheries, as follows:

5 AAC 01.220 is amended to read:

Fishing gear allowed in one section of the Yukon River for a commercial and/or subsistence fishery should be allowed for subsistence in the whole river unless a run sustainability issue is apparent. In the case of run sustainability being an issue, commercial restrictions shall be addressed first.

Tanana Rampart Manley Fish and Game Advisory Committee supported this unanimously.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? At issue here is that over the years, commercial fishing interests often get heard best because of more money and manpower to promote itself. This was seen long ago during the creation of unfair limited entry quotas and allowing commercial fishers in areas with the best fishing and biggest quotas to harvest fish with the highly efficient method of drift netting while some areas of very poor fishing are only allowed to setnet for their subsistence needs.

This issue continues today with commercial interests recently obtaining the right to beach seine and drift dipnet for commercial chum salmon in some areas not traditional, yet in our area which had pre-limited entry historical dip net fisheries, dipnet fishing for even subsistence is currently illegal.

Fairness aside, subsistence is supposed to have priority over commercial and we feel this has not been happening.

PROPOSED BY: Tanana Rampart Manley Fish and Game Advisory Committee (EF-C15-024)

PROPOSAL 113 – 5 AAC 01.220. Lawful gear and gear specifications; and 5 AAC 05.330. Gear. Prohibit the use of drift gillnets in the Yukon Area subsistence fishery and in the Yukon Area commercial fishery, as follows:

Suggested language: **There will be no subsistence or commercial drift net fishing allowed on the Yukon River for Chinook salmon**

Tanana Rampart Manley Fish and Game Advisory Committee (TRM AC) supports the similar king salmon part of the Fairbanks AC’s anti-drift net proposal that they plan to be sending in to the board.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? At issue here we feel (unanimous TRM AC vote) is a non-sustainable, very unfair and extremely difficult to manage otherwise, drift net fishery in the Yukon River.

Our basic premise is that if the king runs ever recover to fishable numbers, a sustainable, fair fishery cannot exist with the current situation of allowing drifting in the areas easiest to catch kings and banning it in many of the hardest to catch king areas as is now the case. Drift net fishing also goes against the elders' principle of not targeting other peoples' fish. We believe that drift netting gives fishers way too much access to those kings going the farthest upriver (mid-river Canadian bound—the kings in most trouble) that would not otherwise be caught as frequently. Drift net use prior to the early 1970's was very minimal compared to today's vastly increased numbers we see during present day limited entry fish openings. There will never be a better, less painful time to remedy the unfairness and overfishing capabilities of the drift net fishery on the Yukon than now, while everyone grapples with how best to bring back and manage the fishery in the future.

PROPOSED BY: Tanana Rampart Manley Fish and Game Advisory Committee (EF-C15-016)

PROPOSAL 114 – 5 AAC 01.230. Subsistence fishing permits. Require subsistence salmon fishing permits in Yukon Area District 5 and set permit limits for king salmon during times of king salmon conservation, as follows:

The board will need to determine permit stipulations during times of king salmon conservation.
5 AAC 01.230. Subsistence fishing permits. (b)

(1) for the **taking of salmon in District 5** [YUKON RIVER DRAINAGE UPSTREAM FROM THE WESTERNMOST TIP OF GARNET ISLAND TO THE MOUTH OF THE DALL RIVER];

...

(3) Repealed

(f) In District 5, only during times of king salmon conservation, the department may set permit limits for king salmon by household or communities based upon the estimated surplus of king salmon.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Allow opportunity for subsistence king salmon harvest in District 5 during low king salmon runs through use of household or community subsistence fishing permits. In Districts 1–4 and 6, the department may allow 6-inch mesh gillnets to direct harvest at summer chum salmon with some incidental harvest of king salmon during times of king salmon conservation. Fish wheels may also be allowed to harvest summer chum and other species with king salmon required to be released unharmed. In District 5 there are few summer chum salmon available and the majority of king salmon in this district are Canadian bound. While many Yukon River fishermen can harvest summer chum salmon for food, District 5 fishermen may have less opportunity for obtaining fish for subsistence uses. A permit system would allow for a controlled harvest of king salmon in District 5 to allow for a more equitable distribution of king salmon harvest in this portion of the drainage during low runs. A permit system could allow fishermen to fish earlier in the run rather than fishing late in the run when fish quality is not as good and female king salmon may be more prevalent. A community permit might allow more involvement by local fishermen in

determining when they can fish and how to distribute a limited harvest while still meeting escapement needs to Canada. Since subsistence fishing permits are already required in portions of District 5, it might be reasonable to extend this regulation to the remainder of the district. The permit system would provide subsistence salmon harvest reporting for this portion of the river.

PROPOSED BY: Gene J. Sandone (EF-C15-121)

PROPOSAL 115 – 5 AAC 01.220. Lawful gear and gear specifications. Allow for the retention of king salmon less than 25 inches in length in Yukon Area fish wheel subsistence fisheries, as follows:

- Yukon River subsistence fish wheels
- Subsistence fish wheels that qualify for fish friendly operations would be allowed to retain chinook salmon less than 25 inches in length.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Retention of king salmon in the Yukon River.

There are age classifications of kings within those returning each year that are not needed for sustained yield. Studies in recent years have shown that over 90% of the four year old returning fish are males. The FAC proposal is for a gear restriction within the definition of fish friendly fish wheels that would allow subsistence fishermen to retain a select size of king salmon.

PROPOSED BY: Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F15-069)

PROPOSAL 116 – 5 AAC 01.220. Lawful gear and gear specifications; and 5 AAC 05.368. Anvik River Chum Salmon Fishery Management Plan. During times of salmon conservation in the Yukon Area, require fish wheels with live boxes to be manned and require immediate release of the specified salmon, as follows:

Suggested language:

Fish wheels must be manned at all times when any catch and release of king salmon or other species is required in an executed fishery. There is to be no livebox holding and release of species required to be not kept, river wide. (Note: This was written as to not interfere with more sound fish wheel release practices being considered at present by management such as live chute releasing of king salmon which does not use any live box holding methods.)

Tanana Rampart Manley Fish and Game Advisory Committee (TRM AC) supported this proposal submission unanimously.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? TRM AC is concerned about present regulations allowing and further attempts to increase fish wheels as a legal means

of targeting one species (such as chum salmon) while releasing another species (such as king salmon). Many of the methods of holding, release and equipment used are being portrayed as non-harmful ways of dealing with bycatch. TRM members come from an area of high fish wheel use and many are very familiar with the number of studies (mostly U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in this area) done on fish wheel live box holding and general fish wheel operation and how it affects caught and released fish. We feel these issues have been sufficiently neglected in management and Board of Fish (BOF) actions in the past, despite the literature presented to them and concerns voiced to management, and at Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association and BOF meetings, that a regulation against it needs to be clearly on the books.

PROPOSED BY: Tanana Rampart Manley Fish and Game Advisory Committee (EF-C15-022)

PROPOSAL 117 – 5 AAC 01.220. Lawful gear and gear specifications; 5 AAC 05.362. Yukon River Summer Chum Salmon Management Plan; and 5 AAC 05.368. Anvik River Chum Salmon Fishery Management Plan. Prohibit the use of beach seines in the Yukon Area subsistence salmon fishery and in the Yukon River and Anvik River summer chum salmon commercial fisheries, as follows:

Suggested language:

There will be no subsistence or commercial beach seine fishing allowed on the Yukon River for Chinook salmon

Tanana Rampart Manley Fish and Game Advisory Committee (TRM AC) supported this proposal unanimously.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The TRM AC feels that beach seines should not be allowed to target certain species (such as chum salmon) and release bycatch (such as king salmon) due to the lack of studies showing insignificant harm and multitude of studies showing significant harm to seined king and/or other species. Many of these studies showing harm are in situations where the migration after seining are extremely shorter than Yukon salmon and holding conditions are less severe.

Currently this condition exist under the guise of being not harmful to king salmon yet providing needed opportunity to commercial fishers of chum salmon. Because of the relentless efforts of some commercial interests to get different types of seining passed by the Board of Fisheries (some have passed) through numerous avenues we feel a regulation specifically banning seining in the Yukon is necessary and should be part of a larger effort to create and secure a healthy future for Yukon king salmon.

PROPOSED BY: Tanana Rampart Manley Fish and Game Advisory Committee (EF-C15-017)

PROPOSAL 118 – 5 AAC 01.220. Lawful gear and gear specifications. Establish specifications for a beach seine used for subsistence fishing in the Yukon Area, as follows:

5 AAC 01.220(f) is amended by adding a new paragraph to read:

(10) a beach seine may not exceed 150 fathoms in length or 100 meshes in depth with mesh size that does not exceed three and one-half inches stretched measure.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Beach seines are legal gear under current subsistence fishing regulations, though there are no specifications. Therefore, any combination of net length, depth, and mesh size could be operated within the Yukon Area as a beach seine. Under current regulations, a very large or very long beach seine could potentially capture king salmon. Because of king salmon conservation concerns, it is prudent to ensure beach seine gear will not cause king salmon mortality. The beach seine gear specifications proposed here would also align with proposed commercial beach seine specifications.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F15-016)

PROPOSAL 119 – 5 AAC 01.220. Lawful gear and gear specifications. Require live release of king salmon from subsistence beach seines during times of king salmon conservation in the Yukon Area, as follows:

5 AAC 01.220(n) is amended by adding a new paragraph to read:

(4) a beach seine may be used, however, all king salmon caught with a beach seine must be released to the water alive.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Beach seines are permitted under current regulations as subsistence gear. In 2014, subsistence fishing in Yukon River Districts 1–2 was restricted to dip nets and beach seines to target summer chum salmon while minimizing the impact to a low king salmon run. During times of king salmon conservation, current regulations require live release of king salmon caught in dip nets but do not specify that king salmon caught in beach seine gear must be released alive to the water. Fishermen could retain any king salmon caught using beach seine gear for subsistence fishing. Requiring live release of king salmon from beach seine gear aligns with regulations for other selective gear types, such as dip nets, and also aligns with commercial beach seine regulations during times of king salmon conservation.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F15-024)

PROPOSAL 120 – 5 AAC 01.210. Fishing seasons and periods. Allow subsistence fall chum salmon fishing seven days per week in District 5 of the Yukon Area once a fall chum salmon commercial fishery is opened, as follows:

Suggested language:

In District 5 once a fall chum fishery is determined healthy enough to have commercial openings on it then no subsistence restrictions on days open should be placed on that fishery. It is to be open 7 days a week.

Tanana Rampart Manley Fish and Game Advisory Committee (TRM) supported this proposal submission unanimously.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Fall chum salmon fishing in this area comes late in summer. The weather is cooling and often the rains start making drying of fish difficult if not impossible on many days. Over the years we have tried to point out to management that the current reduced subsistence schedules of 4 days or 5 days a week that we find ourselves in, often do not coincide with days able to put up fish. This is especially true at the beginning of the run where the best quality fish for human consumption are found. For example in the last two years we have documented times where fishers have waited almost an entire open period of fishing only to have the sun come out on the closed days. Fall season is too short and lately, because of the king crisis, it has become too important to lose this opportunity. Admittedly, it is the king crisis that has pushed this issue to the forefront.

Issues of subsistence and commercial opening conflicts have never been a problem in this area but sometimes are a problem for others, so for that reason we ask for this in District 5 only and will let others propose as they choose. Also we are only trying to increase opportunity in situations where it would not be detrimental to any species, so any concerns that the Board of Fisheries or management would have over this proposal, TRM would be happy to adjust the proposal to meet those concerns. TRM has contacted the ADF&G Yukon fall chum manager on this proposal’s acceptability and the language reflects those initial and preliminary talks.

TRM would like to thank the present fall manager for being very helpful in this matter, but we would like to see this in regulation so it would be easier to institute each year and future managers would not have to be educated and convinced of the need in order to execute as proposed. It would happen automatically.

PROPOSED BY: Tanana Rampart Manley Fish and Game Advisory Committee
(EF-C15-021)

PROPOSAL 121 – 5 AAC 01.220. Lawful gear and gear specifications. Expand the area of allowable subsistence drift gillnet fishing for chum salmon in Subdistrict 4-A of the Yukon Area, as follows:

5 AAC 01.220(e)(2) is amended to read:

(e) In Districts 4, 5, and 6, salmon may not be taken for subsistence purposes by drift gillnets, except as follows:

...

(2) in Subdistrict 4-A downstream from the mouth of Stink Creek,

(A) king salmon may be taken by drift gillnets from June 10 through July 14, unless closed by emergency order;

(B) from June 10 through August 2, the commissioner may open, by emergency order, fishing periods during which chum salmon may be taken by drift gillnets;

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? In March 2015, the Alaska Board of Fisheries adopted regulations allowing subsistence drift gillnet fishing, by emergency order, for chum salmon in the upper portion of the Yukon Area Subdistrict 4-A from June 10 through August 2. The intent was to allow subsistence opportunity to target abundant summer chum salmon with drift gillnets during times of king salmon conservation, as there are few set net sites in the area and river conditions can be dangerous for set net fishing during high water events. Fishermen had noted that there was missed opportunity to catch summer chum salmon for subsistence purposes. In 2014, fishermen in the lower portion of Subdistrict 4-A stated that they also experienced difficulty in meeting their subsistence needs for summer chum salmon using set nets. This proposal would extend the drift gillnet opportunity to harvest summer chum salmon for subsistence purposes from the upper portion of Subdistrict 4-A to all of Subdistrict 4-A. It would provide fishery managers emergency order authority to open and close drift gillnet subsistence fishing targeting summer chum salmon during times of king salmon conservation in all of Subdistrict 4-A, not just in the upper portion of the subdistrict.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F15-017)

PROPOSAL 122 – 5 AAC 05.331. Gillnet specifications and operations. Modify Yukon Area commercial set gillnet length specification to an aggregate length standard, as follows:

5 AAC 05.331(a) is amended to read:

- (a) A [NO] person may **not** operate
 - (1)** set gillnet gear that exceeds 150 fathoms in **aggregate** length;
 - (2)** [NO PERSON MAY OPERATE] drift gillnet gear that exceeds 50 fathoms in length.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Set gillnet gear is currently permitted with gear specifications on length for subsistence and commercial fishing. Subsistence regulations specify set gillnet gear as an aggregate length to allow for multiple nets to be fished, with the combined total length of nets limited to 150 fathoms. This proposal would provide clarification and align commercial regulations of set gillnet length to subsistence regulations.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F15-027)

PROPOSAL 123 – 5 AAC 05.362. Yukon River Summer Chum Salmon Management Plan. Further define commercial beach seine specifications for summer chum salmon in the Yukon Area, as follows:

5 AAC 05.362(k)(1)(B) is amended to read:

(1) a permit holder may fish with

...

(B) beach seine gear; **a beach seine may not exceed 150 fathoms in length or 100 meshes in depth** [,] with mesh size that does not exceed **three and one-half** [FOUR] inches stretched measure; and

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Beach seines are allowable gear under current commercial fishing regulations during times necessary for king salmon conservation. However, there are no specifications on length and depth for beach seines. Currently, any combination of net length and depth could be operated within the Yukon Area as a beach seine. Reducing the mesh size aligns with existing gear used in the fishery and may assist in conserving king salmon. The beach seine gear specifications proposed here would complement the proposed subsistence beach seine specifications.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F15-025)

PROPOSAL 124 – 5 AAC 05.331. Gillnet specifications and operations. Allow for six-inch or smaller mesh gillnets in the commercial salmon fishery in Yukon River District 6 by emergency order, as follows:

5 AAC 05.331(d) is amended to read:

(d) In **Districts 4 and 6** [DISTRICT 4], salmon may be taken only with gillnets of six-inch or smaller mesh **during periods established** [AFTER A DATE SPECIFIED] by emergency order.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Current regulations allow commercial set gillnets and fish wheels to be operated in Yukon River Districts 4–6. In 2014, gillnets restricted to six-inch or smaller mesh were allowed in Districts 1–2 for the directed harvest of summer chum salmon while reducing incidental king salmon harvest. However, the department does not have authority to specify six-inch or smaller mesh size for commercial set gillnet gear in District 6. Allowing for six-inch or smaller mesh size gillnets in the salmon fishery in Yukon River District 6 by emergency order gives fishery managers the flexibility to open and close set gillnet fishing targeting summer chum salmon in District 6, while minimizing king salmon mortality. It is common management practice to establish gear specifications by periods rather than after a date specified by emergency order.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F15-026)

PROPOSAL 125 – 5 AAC 05.331. Gillnet specifications and operations. Establish gillnet gear provisions to allow a directed pink salmon commercial fishery in districts 1–3 of the Yukon Area, as follows:

Establish a directed pink salmon fishery in the Yukon River with the use of gillnets four inches or less and no deeper than 50 mesh. Draft language adds a new section (k) to 5 AAC 05.331

5 AAC 05.331. Gillnet specifications and operations

(k) Notwithstanding the other provisions of this section, in Districts 1 - 3, the commissioner may, by emergency order, close the fishing season and immediately reopen the season during which a person may take salmon only with a gillnet that has a mesh size of four inches or less and that is not more than 50 meshes in depth.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Pink salmon runs are strong and a harvestable surplus is available, particularly in even numbered years. Accordingly, we seek to establish a directed pink salmon fishery within the open waters of the Yukon Area using gillnets of four inch or less mesh size and no greater than 50 meshes deep. We believe that favorable market conditions exist. Although small numbers of pink salmon have been sold in the past, these fish were incidentally caught in the directed summer chum salmon fishery. We now seek to establish a directed fishery for pink salmon in the Yukon River. Although there has not been assessment of the pink salmon stock, we believe that it is relatively strong and there are no concerns with escapement and subsistence, particularly during the large runs in even numbered years.

PROPOSED BY: Kwik’pak Fisheries (EF-C15-066)

PROPOSAL 126 – 5 AAC 05.362. Yukon River Summer Chum Salmon Management Plan. Add purse seine gear as an allowable commercial salmon fishing gear to target summer chum salmon in districts 1–3 of the Yukon River during times of king salmon conservation, as follows:

Specifically, we would like the BOF to approve the use of purse seines to harvest the abundant summer chum salmon during times of king salmon conservation 5 AAC 05.362 (k). We also seek that the BOF stipulate that all king salmon caught in a purse seine set must be released immediately and returned to the water unharmed.

5 AAC 05.362. Yukon River Summer Chum Salmon Management Plan

Add a new section (C)

(k)

...

(B) beach seine gear, with mesh size that does not exceed four inches stretched measure; [AND]

(C) **purse seine gear, with a mesh size that does not exceed three and one-half inches stretched measure and a total length not more than 150 fathoms; and**

...

(2) all king salmon caught in dip net, [AND] beach seine gear **and purse seine gear** must be released immediately and returned to the water unharmed.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? A huge commercially available harvestable surplus of summer chum salmon in the Yukon River cannot be harvested with the few gill net opening allowed during the extreme end of the summer chum salmon run (non-selective gear) because of the concern for the very low king salmon runs. Note that the kings and summer chum salmon runs tend to enter the mouth of the river together and migrate upriver concurrently. Previous regulations allowing dipnet and beach seine gear (selective gear) to be used in the Yukon River has allowed only a portion of the huge surplus to be harvested.

Declines in Yukon River king salmon runs have been noted in the Yukon River since 1998. However, the Yukon River king salmon runs have declined to a point that during 2014, ADF&G requested that subsistence fishers reduce their normal king salmon subsistence harvest dramatically and also took action to effectively eliminate the king salmon subsistence harvests within the Alaskan portion of the drainage. During the 2014 season, extremely severe subsistence restrictions were employed throughout the drainage to bolster king salmon escapements and to attempt to meet the agreed upon the minimum escapement of 42,500 king salmon in Canada plus the Canadian share of the TAC. The king salmon subsistence harvest in 2014 was approximately only 4,000 fish in the Alaskan portion of the drainage. The historic average subsistence harvest before the decline in Yukon River king salmon was approximately 45,000 fish.

In contrast, recent Yukon River summer chum salmon runs have been above average in run size. During the past few years, millions of commercially-harvestable summer chum salmon have passed through the Lower Yukon Area with very few being harvested because of the concern for the king salmon escapement. This foregone summer chum salmon harvest has been substantial in recent years, more than 1.0M fish in both 2011 and 2012. Despite new selective commercial fishing gear allowed in the lower Yukon River in 2013 and 2014 by the BOF, which included the use of dipnets, beach seines and shallower and smaller mesh size gillnets (5.5 stretch measure, 30 meshes deep), preliminary estimates indicate that more than 1.8M and 800,000 commercially-available summer chum were passed onto the spawning grounds in 2013 and 2014, respectively. Foregone harvest have translated into a possible loss to the fishermen of over \$22M during the past four years. The actual value of the Yukon Area summer chum salmon harvest was approximately \$6M for the same 4-year period. In contrast, the value of the commercial harvests in the mid-1990s, when king salmon were commercially harvested, was approximately \$15M annually.

The Lower Yukon Area is one of the most impoverished areas in the state of Alaska and the country. Off the road system and located in remote Alaska, fuel can often cost over \$6 a gallon. With little economic opportunity available in the region, fishermen's income has been severely reduced with the closure of the Chinook salmon commercial fishery and we are now struggling against restrictions and conservation concerns to make the commercial summer chum salmon fishery viable. There is an urgent need to find new and innovative ways to commercially harvest the surplus of summer chum salmon in the river while minimizing the impact to king salmon. We believe that the use of purse seines in the Lower Yukon Area would serve that dual purpose.

We believe that the lower Yukon River commercial fishers will benefit because they will be able to harvest more of the available summer chum salmon without any harm to any king salmon caught and released.

We also believe that all Yukon River summer chum salmon subsistence and commercial users will benefit because the summer chum salmon escapements will be reduced below the level that may be detrimental to the stock. Drainage-wide summer chum salmon escapements above 2.0M have reduced productivity and may result in smaller runs.

We foresee no harm to any fishers upriver. This is not an allocative issue.

PROPOSED BY: Kwik'pak Fisheries (EF-C15-053)

PROPOSAL 127 – 5 AAC 05.200. Fishing districts and subdistricts; and 5 AAC 05.350. Closed waters. Expand the commercial fishing area of Yukon Area District 1, as follows:

We recommend that the area open to commercial fishing be expanded to include the area between latitudes of Point Romanof and Apoon Pass. Draft regulatory language follows:

5 AAC 05.200. Fishing districts and subdistricts. (a) District 1 consists of that portion of the Yukon River drainage from **Point Romanof [ITS TERMINUS AT APOON PASS]** extending **south and** west [AND SOUTH] along the coast of the delta to the terminus of Black River upstream to the northern edge of the mouth of the Anuk River and all waters of the Black River.

5 AAC 05.350. Closed waters. Salmon may not be taken in the following waters:

(2) waters farther than one nautical mile seaward from any grassland bank in District 1 from **Point Romanof** [APOON PASS] extending **south and** west [AND SOUTH] to a line extending seaward from an ADF&G regulatory marker located on the beach approximately one nautical miles south from the mouth of Black River, except that in Acharon Channel of the south mouth of the Yukon River the closed waters are those waters farther than two and one-half nautical miles from a line bearing 285_ extending from an ADF&G regulatory marker located below Chris Point to the opposite side of the channel;

(new number) Pastolik River.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? We seek the Alaska Board of Fisheries to expand the area open to commercial fishing at the mouth of the Yukon River to include that portion from Apoon Pass to Point Romanof. Opening this area to fishing will alleviate crowding in the traditional set net area near the North Mouth of the Yukon River, caused by changes in the river mouth environment.

Because of a buildup of silted in areas of the coast, set net fishermen have less opportunity than they have had in the past. This has been an ongoing problem due to shifting channels. Extending the area open to commercial fishery will help to alleviate this problem.

In addition, we ask that the Pastolik River be closed to commercial salmon fishing because it is a small stock and the quality of those fish would be poor for commercial sale.

PROPOSED BY: Kwik'pak Fisheries (EF-C15-074)

PROPOSAL 128 – 5 AAC 05.200. Fishing districts and subdistricts; and 5 AAC 05.350. Closed waters. Extend commercial fishing three miles offshore and north to Point Romanof in District 1 of the Yukon Area, as follows:

We recommend that the area open to commercial fishing be expanded to the 3 mile limit around the delta. Draft regulatory language follows:

5 AAC 05.200(a) Fishing districts and subdistricts is amended to read:

(a) District 1 consists of that portion of the Yukon River drainage from **the latitude of Point Romanof [ITS TERMINUS AT APOON PASS]** extending **south and** west [AND SOUTH] along the coast of the delta to the terminus of Black River upstream to the northern edge of the mouth of the Anuk River and all waters of the Black River.

5 AAC 05.350. Closed waters is amended to read:

Salmon may not be taken in the following waters:

(1) repealed 4/13/2013;

(2) waters farther than **three** [ONE] nautical mile seaward from any grassland bank in District 1 from Apoon Pass extending west and south to a line extending seaward from an ADF&G regulatory marker located on the beach approximately one nautical miles south from the mouth of Black River[, EXCEPT THAT IN ACHARON CHANNEL OF THE SOUTH MOUTH OF THE YUKON RIVER THE CLOSED WATERS ARE THOSE WATERS FARTHER THAN TWO AND ONE-HALF NAUTICAL MILES FROM A LINE BEARING 285_ EXTENDING FROM AN ADF&G REGULATORY MARKER LOCATED BELOW CHRIS POINT TO THE OPPOSITE SIDE OF THE CHANNEL];

(3) all waters south and west of a line extending seaward from an ADF&G regulatory marker located on the beach approximately one nautical mile south of the mouth of Black River, in a northwestern direction to an ADF&G regulatory marker located **three** [ONE] nautical mile offshore;

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? We seek the Alaska Board of Fisheries to expand the area open to commercial fishing at the mouth of the Yukon River to include all State of Alaska waters, extending three nautical miles seaward, around the delta. Opening this area to fishing will provide better quality salmon for harvest, it will alleviate crowding in the traditional set net area caused by changes in the river mouth environment, and it

will provide state managers options when/if the federal government prohibits commercial fisheries on abundant salmon species.

Please note that Kwik'pak Fisheries is also submitting a proposal to establish a directed commercial pink salmon fishery using four inch mesh gillnets. Because Yukon River pink salmon mature rapidly once they enter into the river, harvesting them in the ocean will ensure much better quality than harvesting in the river.

Secondarily, we would like to be able to harvest chum salmon in the ocean, also for better quality.

Thirdly, because of a buildup of silted in areas of the coast, set net fishermen have less opportunity than they have had in the past. This has been an ongoing problem due to shifting channels. Extending the area open to commercial fishery will help to alleviate this problem.

Other reasons for allowing commercial fishing out to the 3-mile limit surrounding the Yukon Delta are:

- It was the traditional legal boundary in the past;
- It would provide more room for set net fishermen, which has always been a traditional fishery;
- It would allow drift fishermen to fish in less concentrated areas during the compressed gillnet fishery openings; and
- It would provide more opportunity to subsistence fish.

PROPOSED BY: Kwik'pak Fisheries (EF-C15-073)

PROPOSAL 129 – 5 AAC 01.170. Lawful gear and gear specifications. In the Norton Sound-Port Clarence Area during times of conservation, require the return of a specified salmon species immediately to the water unharmed when beach seining, as follows:

5 AAC 01.170 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

(m) During times when the commissioner determines that it is necessary for the conservation of a specific species of salmon, the commissioner may, by emergency order, close the fishing season in any portion of the Norton Sound-Port Clarence Area and immediately reopen the season in any portion of the Norton Sound-Port Clarence Area to subsistence fishing with beach seines and require that a specified salmon species be returned immediately to the water unharmed.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? During times of abundance of one salmon species there may be the necessity to conserve another salmon species. The department could allow the harvest of the salmon species in abundance while still protecting the salmon species requiring conservation. For example, during recent years, it has been necessary to conserve king salmon by requiring the release of king salmon back to the water alive while beach seining for chum and pink salmon. In Subdistrict 1, there have been times when there was the need to conserve chum or coho salmon. Beach seine gear may be used in such instances to allow

harvest of other species, particularly pink salmon, while requiring live release of species returning in low numbers. This proposal would provide more flexibility for the department to address salmon conservation concerns throughout the Norton Sound-Port Clarence Area.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F15-013)

PROPOSAL 130 – 5 AAC 01.170. Lawful gear and gear specifications. Allow the restriction of gillnet mesh size during times of conservation for chum and king salmon in any portion of the Norton Sound-Port Clarence Area, as follows:

5 AAC 01.170(i), (j), and (k) are amended to read:

(i) Notwithstanding (a) – (h) of this section, during times when the commissioner determines **that it is** [IT TO BE] necessary for the conservation of chum salmon, the commissioner, by emergency order, may close **the fishing season in any portion of the Norton Sound-Port Clarence Area and immediately reopen the season in any portion of the Norton Sound-Port Clarence Area during which gillnets**

(1) [THE PINK SALMON FISHING SEASON IN SUBDISTRICTS 1–6 AND IMMEDIATELY REOPEN THE SEASON IN THOSE SUBDISTRICTS, DURING WHICH GILLNETS] must have a mesh size of four and one-half inches or less; **and**

(2) **may not exceed the length specified by the commissioner** [THE FISHING SEASON IN SUBDISTRICTS 2–6 AND IMMEDIATELY REOPEN THE SEASON IN THOSE SUBDISTRICTS TO SUBSISTENCE FISHING WITH ANY GEAR THAT IS LAWFUL UNDER THIS SECTION, EXCEPT GILLNETS].

(j) Notwithstanding (a) – (h) of this section, during times when the commissioner determines **that** it is necessary for the conservation of king salmon, the commissioner may, by emergency order, close the fishing season in **any portion of the Norton Sound-Port Clarence Area** [SUBDISTRICTS 5 AND 6] and immediately reopen the season in **any portion of the Norton Sound-Port Clarence Area** [THOSE SUBDISTRICTS] during which gillnets

(1) must have a mesh size of

(A) **four and one-half inches or less;**

(B) six inches or less; or

(C) [(B)] seven inches or less; and

(2) may not exceed the length specified by the commissioner.

(k) **Repealed** / / [IN SUBDISTRICTS 5 AND 6 THE COMMISSIONER MAY, BY EMERGENCY ORDER, OPEN AND CLOSE FISHING PERIODS DURING WHICH A GILLNET MAY HAVE A MESH SIZE NO GREATER THAN

(1) FOUR AND ONE-HALF INCHES;

(2) SIX INCHES; OR

(3) SEVEN INCHES].

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Under current regulations, the department may only restrict gillnet mesh size during subsistence fishing in Subdistricts 5 and 6 for the conservation of king salmon and in Subdistricts 1–6 for the conservation of chum salmon. However, there are portions of the Norton Sound-Port Clarence Area that are not part of

any subdistrict, such as the St. Michael and Stebbins areas that are adjacent to the Yukon Area. During years of king salmon conservation, fishermen have been able to fish in southern Norton Sound adjacent to the Yukon Area with no gillnet mesh size restrictions. This proposal would provide more flexibility for the department to address any chum or king salmon conservation concerns throughout the Norton Sound-Port Clarence Area. Subsection (k) may be repealed since it is redundant to subsection (j).

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F15-014)

PROPOSAL 131 – 5 AAC 01.160. Fishing seasons and periods; and 5 AAC 01.170. Lawful gear and gear specifications. Increase subsistence fishing time with gillnets and beach seines in Subdistrict 1 of Norton Sound District, as follows:

In Subdistrict 1, allow fresh water subsistence periods east of Cape Nome five days a week from Wednesday 6:00 p.m. to Monday 6:00 p.m. from June 15 through August 15 with either gillnets or beach seine to allow subsistence fishermen an increased opportunity to harvest available salmon. After August 15, no beach seines in fresh waters unless by emergency order but gillnets would continue on a five day a week schedule. West of Cape Nome, allow marine water fishing five days a week from Wednesday 6:00 p.m. to Monday 6:00 p.m. with gillnets only. In the fresh water west of Cape Nome, allow for gillnet or beach seine from June 15 to August 1, from Wednesday 6:00 p.m. to Monday 6:00 p.m. After August 1 allow for gillnets only in fresh water.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? I would like the Board of Fisheries to address unnecessarily restrictive subsistence fishing periods and methods of harvest both east and west of Cape Nome in Norton Sound. I would like more time to fish when the weather may be better for fishing and processing fish, and also I would like to use more effective means of harvest during pink and chum seasons.

PROPOSED BY: Thomas Sparks (EF-C15-049)

PROPOSAL 132 – 5 AAC 01.170. Lawful gear and gear specifications. Add cast net as a legal subsistence fishing gear and allow both dip net and cast net gear to be used in all subsistence fisheries in the Norton Sound-Port Clarence Area, as follows:

5 AAC 01.170. Lawful Gear and Gear Specifications. (a) Salmon may be taken only by

- (1) gillnet;
- (2) beach seine;
- (3) fish wheel;
- (4) a hook and line attached to a rod or pole, as specified in (h) of this section;
- (5) dip net **or cast net**, as specified in (l) of this section.

(b) Fish other than salmon may be taken only by set gillnet, drift gillnet, beach seine, fish wheel, pot, longline, fyke net, dip net, **cast net**, jigging gear, spear and lead, or, as specified in (h) of this section, by a hook and line attached to a rod or pole.

(I) [IN THE PILGRIM RIVER DRAINAGE,] Dip nets **or cast nets** may be used to take salmon, except that during times when the commissioner determines that it is necessary for the conservation of specific salmon species, the commissioner may, by emergency order, close the season and immediately reopen the season during which specific salmon species must be returned immediately to the water alive.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? I propose that the Board of Fisheries adopt regulations allowing the use of cast nets as well as dip nets in waters open to subsistence fishing in the Norton Sound - Port Clarence Area with the exception of fishing for salmon in those waters open only to hook and line only gear for salmon as described in 5 AAC 01.1.75(c). Use of cast nets is currently not authorized, nor is the use of dip nets for salmon except in the Pilgrim River. Allowing the use of cast nets and dip nets will provide opportunity for participation in subsistence fisheries that are not currently available. Cast nets and dip nets are less expensive than seine and drift or set gillnet gear and do not require the investment in boats and motors necessary for the effective use of seine and gillnet gear. Also, cast nets, and in some instances dip nets, are effective gear in waters that are not suitable for use of seines or gillnets. Cast nets and dip nets allow fishers to be more selective in the fish that are harvested, as non-target fish may be released back into the water with little or no harm.

The primary interest in use of cast nets, that I am aware of, is to take capelin along Norton Sound beaches when they arrive in mid-summer and to take white fish in fresh water later in the summer.

PROPOSEDBY: Dan Reed (EF-C15-037)

PROPOSAL 133 – 5 AAC 04.395. Subdistricts 5 and 6 of the Norton Sound District and the Unalakleet River King Salmon Management Plan. Allow the use of beach seines for commercial harvest of chum and pink salmon in Subdistricts 5 and 6 of the Norton Sound District during times of king salmon conservation, as follows:

5 AAC 04.395(j) is added to read:

5 AAC 04.395(j) If subsistence fishing for king salmon is restricted, the commissioner may, by emergency order, open the commercial chum and pink fishery to beach seine gear, with mesh size that does not exceed four inches stretched measure. King salmon may not be retained.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Allow use of beach seine gear for commercial harvest of chum and pink salmon in Norton Sound subdistricts 5–6 during times of king salmon conservation. Harvest of surplus Norton Sound chum and pink salmon have been reduced for years because of the need to minimize incidental harvest of king salmon. Beach seining was adopted on the Yukon River as a method to allow for the selective harvest of surplus chum salmon. It is believed that this gear type will allow for additional harvest of chum

and pink salmon while not harming king salmon. Historically a significant chum harvest occurred between June 2 and July 1. The use of beach seine will allow for additional commercial chum and pink salmon harvest.

PROPOSED BY: Southern Norton Sound Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F15-092)

PROPOSAL 134 – 5 AAC 01.150. Description of the Norton Sound-Port Clarence Area; 5 AAC 01.200. Description of Yukon Area; 5 AAC 04.100. Description of Norton Sound-Port Clarence Area; 5 AAC 04.200. Fishing districts and subdistricts; 5 AAC 05.100. Description of Yukon Area; and 5 AAC 05.200. Fishing districts and subdistricts. Change the boundary line separating the Norton Sound-Port Clarence Area and Yukon Area at Point Romanof in area and district descriptions, as follows:

5 AAC 01.150. Description of the Norton Sound-Port Clarence Area. The Norton Sound-Port Clarence Area includes all waters of Alaska between the latitude of the westernmost tip of Cape Prince of Wales and **a line extending 315° northwest from [THE LATITUDE OF] Point Romanof at 63° 12.16' N. lat., 162° 49.72' W. long.**, including the waters of Alaska surrounding St. Lawrence Island and those waters draining into the Bering Sea.

5 AAC 01.200. Description of Yukon Area. The Yukon Area includes all waters of Alaska between **a line extending 315° northwest from [THE LATITUDE OF] Point Romanof at 63° 12.16' N. lat., 162° 49.72' W. long.** and the latitude of the westernmost point of the Naskonat Peninsula, including those waters draining into the Bering Sea.

5 AAC 04.100. Description of Norton Sound-Port Clarence Area. The Norton Sound-Port Clarence Area includes all waters of Alaska between the latitude of the westernmost tip of Cape Prince of Wales and **a line extending 315° northwest from [THE LATITUDE OF] Point Romanof at 63° 12.16' N. lat., 162° 49.72' W. long.**, including the waters of Alaska surrounding St. Lawrence Island and those waters draining into the Bering Sea.

5 AAC 04.200. Fishing districts and subdistricts.

(b) The Norton Sound District consists of all waters between the latitude of the westernmost tip of Cape Douglas and **a line extending 315° northwest from [THE LATITUDE OF] Point Romanof at 63° 12.16' N. lat., 162° 49.72' W. long.** The following are the regulatory subdistricts of the Norton Sound District:

...
5 AAC 05.100. Description of Yukon Area. The Yukon Area includes all waters of Alaska between **a line extending 315° northwest from [THE LATITUDE OF] Point Romanof at 63° 12.16' N. lat., 162° 49.72' W. long.** and the latitude of the westernmost point of the Naskonat Peninsula, including those waters draining into the Bering Sea.

5 AAC 05.200. Fishing districts and subdistricts.

(h) Coastal District: all waters between the latitude of the westernmost point of the Naskonat Peninsula and **a line extending 315° northwest from [THE LATITUDE OF] Point Romanof at 63° 12.16' N. lat., 162° 49.72' W. long.** not included in (a) – (f) of this section.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The current boundary description using the latitude of Point Romanof separating the Norton Sound-Port Clarence Area and the Yukon Area bisects part of the Yukon River delta, which is part of the Yukon Area. Changing the description will more clearly separate the two fishing areas and reduce potential confusion.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F15-015)

PROPOSAL 135 – 5 AAC 74.010. Seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Tanana River Area. Prohibit the use of set lines in Grizzly and Jack lakes, as follows:

Add **Grizzly Lake** and **Jack Lake** to the list of lakes in the Tanana River drainage sport fish regulations in which “Burbot set lines may not be used”.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? State sport fish general regulations regarding the use of set lines for burbot are not consistent for a localized group of five lakes which are known to support burbot populations. These lakes are located near Nabesna and the geologic divide between the Upper Copper River drainage and the Tanana River drainage. Copper, Tanada, and Sheep Lakes are in the Copper River drainage, while Jack and Grizzly lakes are in the Tanana River drainage. Access is primarily by snowmachine trails originating from the Nabesna Road. Trails then cross and interconnect these lakes.

General regulations of the Tanana River Area (Jack and Grizzly Lakes) allow the seasonal use of set lines in all but five lakes, whereas, the general regulations of the adjacent Upper Copper/Upper Susitna Area prohibit the use of set lines in all lakes (including Copper, Tanada, and Sheep lakes). Fishermen travelling through and among these lakes could easily be confused as to which regulations apply.

Burbot are relatively long-lived and slow growing making them potentially vulnerable to overexploitation in small water bodies. Conservation concerns could arise if sustained trends of increased harvests were to occur on these lakes. Set lines are known to be a highly effective means of catching burbot. Due to conservation concerns, state regulations have banned the use of set lines in all lakes of the adjacent Upper Copper/Upper Susitna Management Area since 1992.

Passage of this proposal will create burbot fishery regulations that are consistent for all lakes of this one localized area that are known to support burbot populations. It will standardize these regulations with those of the management area from which the fishery participants access the

lakes. It will also eliminate the incentive of utilizing unattended lines to target slow growing fish populations in the relatively small Grizzly and Jack Lakes.

PROPOSED BY: National Park Service (EF-C15-065)

PROPOSAL 136 – 5 AAC 74.010. Seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Tanana River Area. Allow only one fishing line per angler during the Fielding Lake winter fishery, as follows:

Under 5 AAC 74.010(7), add the following:

Only one closely attended line may be used when ice fishing

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Since approximately 2007 there has been a no bait restriction at Fielding Lake which has severe implications for those who enjoy ice fishing. The no bait restriction was implemented because harvests were exceeding an 80 fish a year recommended upper limit. A recent 2010-2011 stock assessment reached the conclusion that the 1999 estimate of mature lake trout was biased low resulting in an expanded population estimate. Harvest estimates since 2007 have been under half the upper limit set by the Department. Same years, far lower.

I believe there is room for compromise to allow reasonable ice fishing opportunities at Fielding Lake while limiting harvest to within the fair and appropriate levels set by the department.

If my other submitted proposal allowing a limited winter bait season is implemented, reducing the number of closely attended lines from two to one should also be implemented. The Lake Trout Management Plan indicates studies have shown that two lines can significantly increase catch rates. The Management Plan further discusses this alternative under their gear restriction section to limit harvest. Other studies indicate reducing the number of lines to one, very significantly increases the odds that jigging is the preferred fishing method. This has two very important results: first the catch rate can be significantly reduced, but not the opportunity, and second, mortality is reduced by better insuring lip caught fish.

If nothing changes, those who enjoy ice fishing at Fielding Lake will continue to have very limited opportunities to catch burbot and lake trout.

Other options considered:

- Keeping current regulations intact. My belief is this unreasonably limits fair opportunity when there are creative solutions available to promote opportunity and keep harvest within acceptable limits.

PROPOSED BY: Ethan Birkholz (EF-C15-051)

PROPOSAL 137 – 5 AAC 74.010. Seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Tanana River Area. Allow the use of bait during the winter fishery on Fielding Lake, as follows:

5 AAC 74.010(d)(7)(B) is amended to:

Modify the special regulations concerning bait, for Fielding Lake as follows:

The use of set lines is prohibited April 16-October 31: Only one unbaited, single hook, artificial lure may be used November 1-April 15: Only one single hook, artificial lure, bait may be used.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Since approximately 2007 there has been a no bait restriction at Fielding Lake which has severe implications for those who enjoy ice fishing. The no bait restriction was implemented because harvests were exceeding an 80 fish a year recommended quota. A recent 2010-2011 stock assessment reached the conclusion that the 1999 estimate of mature lake trout was biased low. In addition harvest estimates since 2007 have been under half the target quota. Same years, far lower.

I believe there is room for compromise to allow a limited winter season that allows bait, similar to nearby lakes at Summit and Paxson. A regulation allowing bait, but still prohibiting set lines from November 1 to April 15, will allow a reasonable opportunity to fish for lake trout as well as burbot and, I believe, still keep the lake trout fishery under the recommended harvest quota.

If nothing changes, those who enjoy ice fishing at Fielding Lake will have no opportunity to catch burbot and extremely limited success fishing for lake trout.

Other options considered:

- Keeping current regulations intact. My belief is this unreasonably limits fair opportunity.
- Changing size limit and harvest to one fish any size. My experience fishing since the minimum 26 inch rule went into effect, is the number and size of mature lake trout has increased. I wish to keep this as is.
- Catch and release only. This would be acceptable to me, but I feel is unwarranted given the current sustained fish population.
- Further shortening a proposed winter bait regulation, say from January 1 to March 31. I would be open to this if it would be more palatable, but honestly feel it is not needed.
- Adding a "one tended line" restriction. Studies indicate this greatly increases the odds that jigging is the preferred fishing method which will reduce mortality. This should be added and is in fact mentioned in the lake trout management plan as a possible alternative.

PROPOSED BY: Ethan Birkholz

(EF-C15-050)

PROPOSAL 138 – 5 AAC 74.010. Seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Tanana River Area. Allow retention of Arctic grayling on the Chena River, as follows:

This proposal would allow a limited harvest of Arctic grayling less than 12 inches from June 1 to July 15 from a marker placed by the department 500 yards downstream of the Nordale Road Bridge to the confluence with the Tanana River including Piledriver Slough. From June 1 – July 15 the Chena River would remain closed to grayling retention above the Nordale Bridge. From July 16 to May 31 the entire Chena River would be closed to all grayling retention. The normal gear restrictions would apply. This regulation will sunset after three years.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Retention of grayling in a portion of the Chena River drainage.

The Chena River has been catch and release for Arctic grayling since 1991 (by EO and then regulation). The department has conducted virtually no studies on the population of Arctic grayling since 2005. The last stock assessments and abundance estimates are now 10 years old. The department has no funding for new work. The fishery is touted as one of the best “large” grayling streams on the road system and users report large congregations of fish on several stretches of the river.

The Fairbanks AC has supported the restriction to catch and release, but it was with the expectancy that the department would keep track of this population so that some harvest of grayling could be allowed without harm to the population. Anglers now concentrate the catch and release fishing at access points. The estimated mortality for the catch and release fishery is 5% to 7%. Because a large number of anglers on the lower river are children, visitors and new sports fishermen, some of the fish are treated pretty roughly in the catch and release fishery.

Our proposal would allow a very limited harvest. The limits would be both by season, size and bag limit and a sunset to the harvest regulation. The AC would like the department to have some information on the harvest because it has been so long since harvest was allowed; there is no data on the impact of limited harvest to the population. A three year “trial” would give the managers some information to work with. If this waterway is so popular it can be advertised in numerous “fish Alaska” type publications it should be studied for the potential for a return to some harvest. There is absolutely no need for the entire Chena River to catch and release forever. For example, the new Fairbanks hatchery can add fish to the system if the population starts to drop again.

PROPOSED BY: Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F15-067)

PROPOSAL 139 – 5 AAC 74.010. Seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Tanana River Area. Update the Tanana River Area stocked waters regulation, as follows:

5 AAC 74.010(c)(29) is amended to read:

(29) in stocked waters, the bag, possession, and size limit for rainbow trout, Arctic char/Dolly Varden, landlocked salmon, and Arctic grayling is 10 of all stocked species combined, of which no more than one fish may be 18 inches or greater in length; for the purposes of this paragraph, "stocked waters" include [ARTILLERY LAKE,] Backdown Lake, Ballaine Lake, Bathing Beauty Pond, Bear Lake (Eielson Air Force Base), Big "D" Pond, Birch Lake, Bluff Cabin Lake, Bolio Lake, Brodie Lake, Bullwinkle Lake, [CAVALRY LAKE,] Chena Lake, Chet Lake, CHSR 25.0 Mile Pit, CHSR 30.0 Mile Pit, CHSR 42.8 Mile Pit (Red Squirrel Pit), CHSR 45.5 Mile Pit, CHSR 47.9 Mile Pit, Coal Mine Road #5, Craig Lake, **Cushman Lake**, Dick's Pond, Doc Lake, Donna Lake, Donnelly Lake, Forrest Lake, Four Mile Lake, Fourteen Mile Lake, Geskakmina Lake, Ghost Lake, Grayling Lake [,] (Eielson Air Force Base), Hidden Lake (Eielson Air Force Base), Hidden Lake (Tetlin NWR.), [HORSESHOE LAKE,] "J" Lake, Jan Lake, Johnson Pit #2, [KENNA LAKE,] Ken's Pond, Kids Fishing Pond, [KIMBERLY LAKE,] Last Lake, Lisa Lake, Little Donna Lake, Little Lost Lake, Lost Lake, [LUKE LAKE,] Lundgren Pond, Manchu Lake, Mark Lake, Monte Lake, Monterey Lake, Moose Lake (Eielson Air Force Base), Mosquito Creek Lake, Mullins Pit, Nenana City Pond, Nickel Lake, [NO MERCY LAKE,] Nordale #2, North Chena Pond, North Pole Pond, North Twin Lake, Olnes Pond, Otto Lake, Parks 261 Pond, Paul's Pond, Polaris Lake, Quartz Lake, Rangeview Lake, Rapids Lake, Richardson Hwy. 28 Mile Pit, Richardson Hwy. 31 Mile Pit, Richardson Hwy. 81 Mile Pit, [ROCKHOUND LAKE,] Shaw Pond, Sheefish Lake, Sirlin Drive Pond, [SOUTH JOHNSON LAKE,] South Twin Lake, Steese Hwy. 28.8 Mile Pit, Steese Hwy. 29.5 Mile Pit, Steese Hwy. 31.6 Mile Pit, Steese Hwy. 33.5 Mile Pit, Steese Hwy. 34.6 Mile Pit, Steese Hwy. 35.8 Mile Pit, Steese Hwy. 36.6 Mile Pit, Stringer Rd. Pond, [STRYKER LAKE,] Triangle Lake, Wainwright #6, Weasel Lake, West Iksgiza Lake, Z Pit (Chena Floodway);

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? In conjunction with each Alaska Board of Fisheries cycle, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game reviews stocked waters to ensure consistency between the *Statewide Stocking Plan for Recreational Fisheries*, Tanana River Area stocked waters regulations, and the *Tanana River Area Stocked Waters Management Plan* (5 AAC 74.065). Stocked waters may be removed from the stocking plan, no longer stocked, and removed from the corresponding regulations due to a loss of public access, poor fish growth or survival, or insufficient fishing effort. As new waters are identified and included in the stocking plan they are added to the regulations.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F15-049)

PROPOSAL 140 – 5 AAC 73.010. Seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Yukon River Area. Repeal Yukon River Area rainbow trout regulations, as follows:

5 AAC 73.010(b)(4) is repealed:
 (b) ...
 ...

(4) repealed / / [RAINBOW TROUT: THE BAG AND POSSESSION LIMIT IS TWO FISH, OF WHICH ONLY ONE FISH MAY BE 20 INCHES OR GREATER IN LENGTH];

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Current Yukon River Area sport fishing regulations include a bag and possession limit for rainbow trout. Wild or stocked populations of rainbow trout are not present in the Yukon River drainage. The species has not been captured or observed during department assessment projects or reported in the Statewide Harvest Survey. The current regulation imposes unnecessary language for a species that is not present in the Yukon River drainage and may cause confusion among sport anglers who may expect to catch rainbow trout in the Yukon River drainage since there is a bag and possession limit in regulation.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F15-050)

PROPOSAL 141 – 5 AAC 01.120. Lawful gear and gear specifications. Recognize rod and reel fishing as a legal means for subsistence fishing in all of the Kotzebue District, as follows:

5 AAC 01.120(b) is amended to read:

(b) Fish other than salmon may be taken by set gillnet, drift gillnet, beach seine, fish wheel, pot, longline, fyke net, dip net, jigging gear, spear, and lead, or, as specified in (f) of this section, **by rod and reel** or by a hook and a line attached to a rod or a pole.

...

(f) a person may use a rod and reel or a hook and line attached to a rod or a pole when subsistence fishing only

(1) in the state waters of, and all flowing waters that drain into, the Chukchi Sea or Kotzebue Sound from **Point Hope**[CAPE ESPENBERG] to Cape Prince of Wales;

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Recognize rod and reel as lawful gear for taking fish for subsistence and change the geographic area that 5 AAC 01.120 pertains to.

People in the Northwest Arctic Borough currently need a sport fish license to subsistence fish with rod and reel in state waters. Many fisheries, like herring snagging off the beach at Kotzebue and trout fishing in the Kivalina Lagoon, are carried out by people during a brief period using a rod and reel who otherwise do not fish with rod and reel the remainder of the year or for sport at any time. Others who fish in the region and around the state (whether residing in the region or not) regularly obtain sport fishing licenses. This would not be expected to change in any meaningful way if the proposal was adopted. This would be expected to pertain to a small number of individuals who use a rod and reel only for subsistence purposes in a very limited way in time and space.

Many of these same individuals being discussed currently do not purchase sport fishing licenses. The majority of their fishing is done by every other legal subsistence method throughout the year, which is basically everything from nets to hook and line through the ice. The only

exception to legal methods for subsistence fishing is rod and reel. Because they are used to being allowed to harvest hundreds of fish throughout the year by all other methods it should not be remarkable that they may not even think about it the very few times they may harvest fish with rod and reel. However, some of them have been subject to law enforcement actions over the years due to their lack of a license.

A similar allowance is provided on the northern Seward Peninsula.

PROPOSED BY: Kotzebue Sound Fish and Game Advisory Committee (EF-C15-028)

PROPOSAL 142 – 5 AAC 01.220. Lawful gear and gear specifications. Change the dates gillnet gear may be used in the South Fork and Middle Fork of the Koyukuk River from November 1 through June 30 to August 20 through June 30, as follows:

5 AAC 01.220(f)(8) is amended to read:

Gillnets three and one-half inches, (current size restriction), may be used only from August 20–June 30.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Change the open period for when subsistence gillnet may be used in the Middle and South Fork permit area, from the current November 1 to June 30 season, to August 20 to June 30. This proposal would still protect salmon when present but allow fall harvest of whitefish, grayling, suckers, and pike. I collected salmon samples under ADF&G Commissioner’s permit from 2010 to 2013, for the Genetic Conservation Lab. I found only summer chum and Chinook salmon present in the upper Koyukuk drainages from July15 to August 15. I found no fall chum or coho in the Middle or South fork drainage.

PROPOSED BY: Jack Reakoff (EF-C15-029)

PROPOSAL 143 – 5 AAC 01.244. Minto Flats Northern Pike Management Plan. Reduce the bag and possession limit of northern pike in the Minto Flats Northern Pike Management Plan, as follows:

Amend 5 AAC 01.244(b)(2)(B) Minto Flats Norther Pike Management Plan to read:

(B) there is no daily or annual bag limit, except that in the area described in (G) of this paragraph, the bag limit is 5 [10] fish and the possession limit is 5 [20] fish and any fish that exceeds 30" will be handled carefully and immediately returned to the river.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? My concern is with the reduced population of pike in Minto Lakes as evidenced by the poor results of summer bait and fly fishing. I'm especially aware of the slow decline over the past 15 years. As a cabin owner and constant visitor to Minto for over 50 years, it's obvious to me that there

is an issue. I believe that the main issue is the subsistence fishery in the Chatanika Special Harvest Area (SHA) that is really a glorified sports fishery that occurs during the winter. After the lakes freeze, the pike migrate to the confluence of Goldstream and the Chatanika. Due to this concentration, the fishing is easy and the fish plentiful. Fishermen are high-grading and taking the larger, female pike and that has a large consequence on the overall population of pike in the system. Of the 80 permits that were issued in 2014/15, 300 pike were reported as taken. Since most of these were large pike, those were mostly female spawners. The average catch for the past 15 years, as reported, exceeds 500 fish per year -that's a minimum of 7,500 large fish gone, which increases significantly when you consider that many of these are the spawning females.

Minto used to be a wonderful fishing experience for the hundreds of people from the Fairbanks North Star Borough who fly or boat into the Lakes each summer. Now, 80 people (permit holders) are allowed to effectively destroy the largest pike fishery in the United States. That's not right or o.k. If thru-the-ice fishing isn't reduced, the population will continue to decline from the low it is now, and it will be very difficult to recover based on the fact that it takes 15 to 20 years to grow a large pike.

My ideal solution would be to close the winter pike fishery down in the Chatanika SHA for 10 to 15 years. I understand that you cannot close subsistence fishing without also closing sport fishing, so at a minimum I would like to see the bag limit and possession limit the same as sport fishing and size restrictions in place to help protect the larger females.

PROPOSED BY: Marv Hassebroek (HQ-F15-086)

PROPOSAL 144 – 5 AAC 01.220. Lawful gear and gear specification. Allow the use of five and one-half inch mesh gillnets across an entire channel in portions of the Koyukuk River for the purpose of targeting northern pike, as follows:

We would like to be able to continue to fish the way we once did, and be able to put a gill net across the entire channel of some waterways. There is a current season that allows us to use smaller mesh nets in the drainage, but we would like to be able to use larger mesh to target larger pike as the smaller mesh does not allow us to effectively catch the larger pike. We would like to do this in the spring when pike are moving out of the lakes and into the rivers.

We would like to be able to use up to a 5 ½ in. mesh until June 15 in Racetrack Slough off of the Koyukuk River as well as sloughs attached to the Huslia River. We would like to be able to use the larger mesh sizes across the entire slough. Since the intent of this is to target larger fish, the idea behind using the larger sized mesh it to allow the smaller whitefish to pass through the net unmolested.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? There are too many pike in parts of the Koyukuk River drainage. Pike are excellent predators and this is leading to a potential decrease in salmon smolt survival, as well as less small mammals and waterfowl.

Residents of Huslia used to string nets across sloughs and other pike heavy areas to catch large numbers of them for subsistence needs. This is no longer legal. We would like to change this regulation in order to harvest more pike for subsistence needs, as well as help increase salmon smolt survival, and the populations of small mammals and birds.

PROPOSED BY: Jack Wholecheese (HQ-F15-090)

PROPOSAL 145 – 5 AAC 77.174. Waters closed to personal use fishing. Repeal the regulation that prohibits the taking of northern pike in the Tanana River drainage personal use fishery, as follows:

5 AAC 77.174(a) is repealed:

(a) **Repealed** / / [WATERS OF THE TANANA RIVER DRAINAGE ARE CLOSED TO THE PERSONAL USE TAKING OF PIKE ABOVE THE MOUTH OF THE KANTISHNA RIVER].

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Northern pike incidentally caught in the Subdistrict 6-C personal use salmon fishery cannot be retained and must be returned to the water dead or alive. The current regulations are inconsistent with the subsistence regulations in the surrounding areas, which allow incidentally caught northern pike to be retained. Available personal use incidental harvest data from Subdistrict 6-C (personal use area) shows that from 2004 through 2013, fishermen have reported the incidental catch of a total of 12 northern pike. Therefore, it is likely few northern pike are encountered in the personal use fishery. The stock of northern pike inhabiting this area is not believed to be in danger of overharvest, and there is no biological concern if retention of northern pike was allowed in this area at the current levels of incidental catch.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F15-029)

PROPOSAL 146 – 5 AAC 04.6XX. Fishing seasons. Create a directed commercial fishery for cisco in Norton Sound or Port Clarence Districts, as follows:

5 AAC 04.610 Fishing seasons. There is no closed season on cisco.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? A market for Cisco (whitefish) is developing in Western Alaska. Cisco from streams in the Norton Sound District have been rumored to have been caught and sold. This is an attempt to legally allow this activity within Norton Sound or Port Clarence Districts. With this regulatory change, these sales would be legal under customary trade (\$500/permit) or under an F04B CFEC card.

PROPOSED BY: Southern Norton Sound Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F15-091)
