

PROPOSAL 64 - 5 AAC 18.350. Closed waters. Close commercial salmon fishing from July 10 to August 10 in all waters north of a line from Ouzinkie Point on Ouzinkie Island to Parokoda Island and then from Paroka Island to the old Alaska Department of Fish and Game marker on Spruce Island near Black Point, as follows:

Create a subsistence only harvest area in Ouzinkie Harbor from July 10th to August 10 north of a line that would run from Ouzinkie point on Ouzinkie Island to Parokoda Is. and then from Paroka Is. to the old ADF&G marker on Spruce Island in proximity to Black Point.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Ouzinkie is a small village on the southwest corner of Spruce Island just north of Kodiak Island. The Ouzinkie harbor is a small cove that encompasses an area about the size of Kodiak's small boat harbor. Kodiak Regional Aquaculture Association has been imprinting and releasing sockeye salmon in Ouzinkie Harbor adjacent to the Ouzinkie Small Boat Harbor for several years. The first return from the stocking program was 2015. Ouzinkie residents enjoyed expanded subsistence harvest opportunities in proximity to their community. As imprinted sockeye continue to return to Ouzinkie Harbor, perhaps in greater numbers in the future, Ouzinkie residents are concerned that a single seine vessel could come in and "scoop up" all of the sockeye the community would anticipate using for subsistence purposes. Ouzinkie understands that these fish are a "common property" resource. Nevertheless, the Kodiak commercial salmon fishery has ample opportunity to intercept and harvest fish returning to Ouzinkie Harbor throughout both Marmot and Kizhuyak Bay. Consequently, it is likely that a high percentage of these fish are already utilized commercially. Surviving fish congregating in Ouzinkie's Harbor are significant for subsistence use, however they remain susceptible to commercial capture as they move in and out with the tide, often beyond current fishing markers. Ouzinkie believes it is better to anticipate the conflict that will occur if Ouzinkie's subsistence fish are taken by a few errant commercial fishermen and to provide a subsistence only use area for a limited time.

PROPOSED BY: Ouzinkie Native Corporation (EF-F16-092)

PROPOSAL 65 - 5 AAC 18.332. Seine specifications and operations. Establish a four and one half inch minimum mesh size for salmon seines from June 1 to July 15, as follows:

We recommend adding a new line under the Seine Specification and Operations. Specifically we recommend the following language be adopted:

- (X) Seine mesh size shall be no less than 4-1/2 inches from June 1 to July 15 in all districts within the Kodiak Area.

Justification:

First: Adopting this proposal will allow the juvenile Chinook salmon and chums to pass through the increased mesh size of the seine nets, while allowing the commercial fishermen to more efficiently harvest their intended species and save them from discarding unwanted bycatch.

Second: We are requesting the Department conduct a thorough analysis of the bycatch data to further determine impacts and to recommend additional mitigating measures. The sustainability of the Chinook and chum salmon species into the future justifies positive action on this proposal by the Board of Fish.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The issue this proposal addresses is the bycatch of juvenile Chinook and chum salmon during some commercial purse seine activities in the Kodiak district. Since the early to mid-1990's, fishermen have begun fishing off the outer capes while targeting Cook Inlet sockeye. However, by fishing there, they also intercept juvenile Chinook and chum salmon. The current mesh size of the purse seine nets, of around 2-1/2 inches to 2-3/4 inches entrap, as bycatch, the juvenile Chinooks that result in substantial amount of mortality to the juvenile Chinooks and Chum salmon. Significant numbers of juvenile fish are intercepted with each seine.

As a consequence of these bycatch activities, over the last 15 to 20 years, Chinook and chum salmon populations in areas within Alaska, such as the many watersheds within Cook Inlet, plus most recently the Karluk River and Ayakulik River, have failed to meet escapement goals and there is growing concern about the long-term population viability of these salmon populations.

We believe that we have reached a point of diminishing returns on these species that if mitigating measures are not taken and this practice is allowed to continue, it will have further detrimental effects on these struggling populations and could lead to their total collapse

PROPOSED BY: Jeff Peterson (EF-F16-058)
