

Paul Warta
Public testimony to the board of fisheries 2/25/2017

Hello my name is Paul Warta, I am 15 years old and I live and fish in the Matanuska and Susitna valleys. I would like to address the board of fisheries. I submitted proposals 223 and 236.

223 is based on the lack of fish that return to the Parks Highway Streams. I have many good memories of fishing for King Salmon on the Parks Highway Streams with my family when I was younger; however, as we don't have enough king salmon on these and other streams the harvest has been restricted. My Family and I have no longer been able to go fishing at these rivers as we cannot keep the Kings and we eat the fish we catch all through the winter. I ask that you would suspend the catch and release allowed on these streams as even this low pressure increases the time until we can retain King Salmon on the Parks Highway Streams.

My other Proposal 236 is a request for a lengthening of hours that we can fish on the Rabbit Slough and Wasilla Creek drainage. This would increase harvest but I feel that there are enough fish in these streams to support this added harvest as the last 4 years have seen emergency openings on Rabbit Slough, Wasilla Creek, Cottonwood Creek, and Fish Creek. This would provide more fishing on these streams without serious repercussions.

Additionally I would like to address proposal 213. This proposal would put a precedented limit on fisheries near the mouth of certain rivers including the Little Susitna River a stream that has a huge sport fishery harvest. This closing of waters to commercially fishing within one statute mile of the mouth is seen in rivers such as the Ninilchick, Stariski, and Anchor Rivers.

I would also like to address proposal 225. It states that only 5 of the last 25 years on the little Susitna have missed the escapement goal, however, on reviewing the data posted on the ADF&G website I found that of the last 20 years: 1997, 1999, 2006, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2016 all failed to meet the low end of the escapement goal making the 5 out of 25 into a 8 out of 20 year ratio. However I would very much like the board to address the fact that 40% of the last 20 years have failed to meet the low end of the escapement goal on the Little Susitna River. This is unacceptable as the Little Su is one of the largest producers of silver salmon in the Matsu Valley.