

Commercial (26 proposals)

Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan (6 proposals)

PROPOSAL 117

5 AAC 21.365. Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan.

Increase open waters from within 600 feet of mean high tide to within 1,200 feet of mean high tide as a restrictive option in the Kasilof Section set gillnet fishery after July 8, as follows:

(C) (3) amend as follows “within 600 feet of the mean high tide mark” change to “within 1200 feet of the mean high tide mark” within this paragraph provision in the Kasilof River Management Plan.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The 600 feet limitation in provision found in (C) (3) does not provide a fair and equitable or reasonable means of harvest on Kasilof bound stocks; this represents an extreme reduction of fishing area by 94.5% (from 1.5 nautical miles to 600 feet). This “further” restrictive measure was only intended to be used after half-mile openings when the Kenai and East Forelands are closed in order for the department to achieve the Kenai late-run sockeye goal. Note: the Kasilof Section genetic data on salmon harvest composition shows a de minimis incidental harvest on Kenai large kings (similarly situated to the drift fishery) and the composition of Kenai bound sockeye are also low, especially along the lower beach stat areas (244-21, 244-22).

PROPOSED BY: Jeff Beaudoin

(HQ-F19-114)

PROPOSAL 118

5 AAC 21.365. Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan.

Amend the *Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan* to include the Kasilof River biological escapement goal, as follows:

Apply similar direction by the Board as found within the Kenai Late-run sockeye salmon management Plan (b) 1; i.e. **meet the biological escapement goal (BEG) range of 140,000–320,000 sockeye salmon.** Placed under (c) (1) of the Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Remarkably, the Kasilof River sockeye salmon BEG goal is not provided within the Kasilof River Sockeye Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Jeff Beaudoin

(HQ-F19-115)

PROPOSAL 119

5 AAC 21.365. Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan.

Eliminate the Kasilof River sockeye salmon optimal escapement goal, as follows:

I recommend the Kasilof River sockeye salmon OEG be eliminated, so 5 AAC 21.365(b) would be amended as follows:

(B) [ACHIEVING THE LOWER END OF THE KENAI RIVER SOCKEYE SALMON ESCAPEMENT GOAL SHALL TAKE PRIORITY OVER NOT EXCEEDING THE UPPER END OF THE KASILOF RIVER OPTIMAL ESCAPEMENT GOAL RANGE OF 160,000 — 390,000 SOCKEYE SALMON.]

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? An OEG of 150,000-300,000 fish for Kasilof River sockeye salmon was first adopted in 2002; the BEG at the time was 150,000-250,000 fish. The reason for the OEG - achieve the lower end of the Kenai River in-river sockeye goal at that timeframe. In both 2000 and 2001, sockeye salmon passage in the Kenai River was near the lower end of the inriver goal of 600,000 fish, while the sockeye salmon BEG in the Kasilof River was exceeded in both years.

In 2011, ADF&G recommended, and the BOF adopted, a new BEG for Kasilof River sockeye salmon of 160,000-340,000 fish and an OEG of 160,000-390,000 fish. The modified BEG represented a 90,000 fish increase on the upper end of the escapement goal, which was 40,000 fish more than the previous OEG. In the 2019 escapement goal memo, ADF&G recommended a BEG for Kasilof River sockeye salmon of 140,000-320,000 fish. If adopted, the upper end of this modified BEG is still 20,000 fish more than the original OEG for this stock.

This proposal seeks to eliminate the OEG for Kasilof River sockeye salmon. Since the OEG was adopted in 2002, the Kasilof River BEG has been exceeded in 14 of 17 years, while the Kenai River inriver goal was exceeded in 13 of 17 years. The need for the additional 50,000 fish buffer the BOF provided for with the original Kasilof River OEG was negated in 2011 with the modified BEG that was 90,000 fish higher than the BEG. The 2019 Kasilof River BEG goal recommendation is still 70,000 more than the original BEG and 20,000 fish more than the original OEG. In keeping with the original intent of the OEG, it is no longer needed because the modified BEG was increased to a level that exceeds the original OEG.

PROPOSED BY: Mark Ducker (HQ-F19-128)

PROPOSAL 120

5 AAC 21.365. Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan.

Remove the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area from (c)(4) of the *Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan*, as follows:

5 AAC 21.365 would be amended as follows:

[(4) AFTER JULY 8, IF THE KASILOF SECTION SET GILLNET FISHERY IS RESTRICTED TO FISHING WITHIN THE FIRST ONE-HALF MILE OF SHORE, THE COMMISSIONER MAY, BY EMERGENCY ORDER, OPEN THE KRSHA DESCRIBED IN (F) OF THIS SECTION TO BOTH SET AND DRIFT GILLNET FISHING USING ONLY ONE GILLNET, FOR FISHING PERIODS NOT TO EXCEED 48 HOURS IN DURATION WITHOUT ONE

PERIOD OF 24 CONSECUTIVE HOURS OF CLOSURE; THE PROVISIONS IN (F)(1) — (8) OF THIS SECTION APPLY DURING THESE OPENINGS;]

Option B: move “fishing periods not to exceed 48 hours in duration without one period of 24 consecutive hours of closure” under the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? At the 2017 UCI finfish meeting, the BOF modified the Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan to state that if fishing with set gillnets is limited to within 600 feet of the mean high tide mark in the Kasilof Section the hours fished are not subject to the time limitations in 5 AAC 21.359(e)(3) and 5 AAC 21.360. Kasilof River sockeye salmon are to be harvested in the fisheries and area that have historically harvested them, including the methods, means, times, and locations of those fisheries. The intention of this modification was to limit use of the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area (KRSHA).

With this new harvest provision, section (C)(4) of the Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan should be eliminated to reinforce the direction of harvesting Kasilof River sockeye salmon found within the Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan’s preamble, i.e., not in the KRSHA.

To meet that directive by the board, this proposal seeks to eliminate (C) (4) from the Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Jeff Beaudoin (HQ-F19-117)

PROPOSAL 121

5 AAC 21.365. Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan.

Amend the *Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan* to prioritize achieving the lower end of the Kenai River late-run king salmon escapement goal, as follows:

(b) Achieving the lower end of the Kenai River sockeye salmon escapement goal **and the lower end of the Kenai River late-run king salmon goal** shall take priority over not exceeding the upper end of the Kasilof River optimal escapement goal range of 160,000-390,000 sockeye salmon.

KRSA recommends no change in the Kasilof River optimum escapement goal – this goal continues to be appropriate for management of mixed stock commercial salmon fisheries in Upper Cook Inlet and recent escapement goal analyses have demonstrated that corresponding escapements within the OEG will continue to provide high levels of production and yield of Kasilof River sockeye.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Current plans do not provide adequate protection for Kenai or Kasilof late-run kings particularly during years of moderate to large Kasilof and/or Kenai sockeye returns. The current Kasilof salmon management plan provides guidance for prioritizing the minimum escapement goal of Kenai sockeye over the high end of the Kasilof sockeye escapement goal during periods of low Kenai sockeye abundance. However, it does not provide similar guidance with respect to the low end of the Kenai late-run king

escapement goals. Meeting the low ends of escapement goals should always take precedence over not exceeding the high ends of other escapement goals due to the large impact on low escapements on future returns, particularly during extended periods of reduced ocean survival like we are currently seeing for kings throughout Cook Inlet.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai River Sportfishing Association (HQ-F19-123)

PROPOSAL 122

5 AAC 21.365. Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan; and 5 AAC 21.330. Gear.

Create a commercial dip net fishery in the Kasilof River, as follows:

5 AAC 21.365 Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan

I don't know where exactly to place the new language...especially as this is a new fishery I can't even begin to give precise regulatory language.

When the commercial fishery is open to setnetting, a permitted commercial fisherman may fish the Kasilof River using up to (3) nets aboard his boat. Salmon shall not be marked as personal use fish, but rather recorded on regular fish tickets. Dip nets shall be subject to the descriptions found in general provisions 5 AAC 39.105 (24). Crewmembers shall be subject to license requirements of 5 AAC 39.109 and 5 AAC 39.110

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? 5 AAC 21.363 Upper Cook Inlet Management Plan

(B) The need to allocate the harvestable surplus within user groups;

(5) in the absence of a specific management plan, it is the intent of the board that salmon be harvested in the fisheries that have historically harvested them, according to the methods, means, times, and locations of those fisheries;

AND

5 AAC 21.365 Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan

(3) and (4)

I would consider this a 'right to work' proposal. Fish and Game management, by BOF directive and at the request of groups such as KPFA are willing to fish a select group of fishermen, prioritizing the leases they fish, while systematically excluding others.

While there is plenty of precedent both in the Northern District and now written into the king salmon management plan in which a fishing period could be fished with a restricted number of nets, I know that this has been and will continue to be strongly opposed. I myself am certainly not sold on the idea. Why should a particular individual be penalized when his/her business is actually productive? I do not think they should. Also, most of the fishermen with holdings in the 600 foot fishery have a level of seniority and command a level of respect.

But this is not all roses. In addition to maintaining a full gear complement, a good portion of their success is due to the fact that depending upon the regulation in play, a large number of fishermen further out on the ocean or up the beach are shut down.

Whatever rationalizations might be given to the relative catch strengths of Kasilof fish in different locations, it is absolutely true that they can be caught in abundance up and down the Inlet, and that this stock is the main or major component of the harvest of fishermen excluded from the harvest. I don't disagree that North K-Beach fishermen should be included amongst those who have historically harvested Kasilof River stock; however, by expanding upon the 600 foot fishery, fishermen and fishing sites from the quarter mile out continue to be systematically excluded from the set net fishery.

In years when we have faced overescapements, a fairly egalitarian fishery, at least in concept, has come into play in the form of the Kasilof Special Harvest Area. I can understand very well many of the fishermen's general dislike of the fishery... having to leave home. And the egalitarian notion is bashed up quite badly when the few fishermen who camp out at the boundary catch the lion share of the incoming fish. However, it is also likely that a lot of the bad opinion towards the KRSHA comes from those who really do not wish to compete or be exposed to an egalitarian fishery. They would prefer that regulation preserve the status quo. Whatever all the different opinion, regulations do state that it is the intent of the BOF that the KRSHA should rarely, if ever be opened under the management subsection in which it is written and this only for conservation reasons.

So where does that leave the situation? I do have a solution. It's not perfect. But I think that it improves upon the current situation.

I would propose for the implementation of a commercial dip net fishery in the Kasilof River whenever the Kasilof Section is open to commercial fishing. An individual holding a commercial set net permit could fish a complement of three nets in the areas open to dipnetting in the Kasilof River.

I am not sure how many permit holders/boats would choose to participate, but given the flow of the river, it really is a nice egalitarian sort of fishery. There are currently very few boats that fish the Kasilof dip net fishery. Nearly all of the PU effort is shore-bound, and so additional effort in the river channel will be for nearly uncontested fish. How often can you say that in the Cook Inlet! It is also timely that the ADFG has recommended lowering the BEG on the Kasilof. As it has been difficult in recent years to achieve that BEG, and as the KRSHA has not been a raving success, additional fishing effort in the form of this new fishery may well be warranted even from a conservation perspective, let alone the allocation issue which I maintain should be the primary focus of the Board.

PROPOSED BY: Nathan Hoff (EF-F19-116)

Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan (13 proposals)

PROPOSAL 123

5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan.

Rename Drift Gillnet Area 2 to the "Conservation and Northern District Allocation Sanctuary Area", as follows:

Under the Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan part (g) item (2) rename the "Drift Gillnet Area 2" to the "Conservation and Northern District Allocation Sanctuary Area"

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The northern district sockeye and coho commercial set net and sport fisheries have been highly restricted since 2012. Northern district user groups in recent years have had restricted fishing for all Northern Cook Inlet species that have escapement goals.

The Department is not taking the direction of the preamble of the Central District Drift Gillnet Management Plan. "The department shall manage the commercial drift gillnet fishery to minimize the harvest of Northern District and Kenai Coho in order to provide sport and guided sport fishermen a reasonable opportunity to harvest these salmon stocks over the entire run, as measured by the frequency of inriver restrictions."

Cook Inlet is being exclusively managed for the Kenai River sockeye, as evidenced in area wide emergency orders for the drift fishery, which have frequently been implemented, at times when northern district streams are being restricted, due to low Coho and Sockeye abundance.

Attaining the optimum escapement goal for Kenai River sockeye, should not take priority over attaining minimum escapement goals of Northern District stocks. If no board action is taken, northern stocks will continue to suffer. The Coho sport fishery on the Little Susitna and Jim Creek (2 of the most participated in fisheries in the Matsu Valley) have largely been restricted since 2012. The Cook Inlet commercial fishery is a mix stock fishery; northern bound fish need more protection. Reasonable opportunity to harvest Coho Salmon on Jim Creek and the Little Susitna River for the duration of the run has not existed consistently in the last 11 years.

Establishing Area 2 as a sanctuary / corridor for northern bound fish, allows for the protection of northern stocks and does not restrict commercial fishing time for the drifters.

PROPOSED BY: Ben Allen

(EF-F19-056)

PROPOSAL 124

5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan.

Amend the purpose of the *Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan* to include inriver users, as follows:

- (a) The purpose of this management plan is to ensure adequate escapement and harvestable surplus of salmon into the Northern District drainages and to provide management guidelines to the department. The department shall manage the commercial drift gillnet fishery to minimize the harvest of
 - (1) Northern District bound salmon in order to provide all inriver users
 - (2) and Kenai River coho salmon in order to provide sport and guided sport fishermen
 - (3) a reasonable opportunity to harvest these salmon stocks over the entire run, as measured

by the frequency of inriver restrictions. The department shall manage the Central District commercial drift gillnet fishery as described in this section.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Inadequate allocation of harvestable salmon for sport, personal use, and guided sport in the Susitna River drainage. The population of inriver anglers in the Mat-Su Borough has grown along with the census figure of over 100,000 local residents. The increased demand for harvestable salmon is not currently being met.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Outdoor Council

(EF-F19-073)

PROPOSAL 125

5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan.

Amend the *Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan* and include inseason assessments, as follows:

Re-write: c) From June 19th until July 19th there will be two regular Monday and Thursday fishing periods from 7:00 until 7:00pm. There will be two (2) restricted openers for drift fishing to Area 1. Between July 6th and July 15th, the Department shall use the restrictions to the best of their ability during this time frame to pass Sockeye Salmon into the Northern District. If actual Kenai run data warrants closing the sockeye salmon drift fishery due to extra low escapements in the Kenai River, the fishery may be closed after the 15th of July by EO. No additional fishing during this time frame, except for possible over escapement concerns which would allow Expanded or Corridor Openings only

d) Starting on July 20th, and ending on August 3rd, the drift fleet will be limited to one Area 1 opening per week and one Expanded Kenai or Kasilof section per week, every Monday and Thursday from 7:00am until 7:00pm, and until the season is closed by EO. This does not apply to Chinitna Bay. If minimum sockeye escapement, is not physically counted at RM 19, within 200,000 fish of the minimum escapement by the end of the day on July 22nd, Management will close the drift fleet and other commercial and sport fisheries as well, until the minimum escapement for sockeye salmon in the Kenai River is met. Once the minimum escapement has been met, the drift and all other fisheries will re-open on a normal basis. If sockeye escapements on the Kenai have exceeded the maximum escapement before the 1st of August. The fishery will be opened to Area 1 once per week, and at least 3 Expanded Kenai and/or Kasilof section openers, including the Anchor Point expanded section fishery. Management can issue any additional closures or opening by EO during this specified period, if needed at any time to prevent under or over escapements, just never more than two (2) Area 1 openings in any week.

f) From August 3rd until closed by EO, the drift fishery will be open every Thursday from 7:00am until 7:00pm in Areas 1, 3 or 4. Mondays the drift fishery will only be open in Areas 3 and 4. Chinitna Bay will remain closed unless opened by EO.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? After many years of drift fishing in Upper Cook Inlet the runs have become smaller in actual size, as well as run strength

over the last 30 years. Many factors are involved, but the biggest is problem is completely managing a run based on forecasts, and not knowing how many spawners there actually are. The regulations are beyond cumbersome and ineffective at lending good management in Upper Cook Inlet. Some of the politics must come out of Cook Inlet for it to survive. The Kenai and its ecosystem are being destroyed. Best decisions are made in real time with real data in front of you. Forecasts are great, but as we have seen repeatedly they are rarely as accurate as we would hope. We need fair date parameters to start with, and then let management do their job as the run materializes. Forecasting and then managing on projected run strengths is not a good management practice and in my opinion has led to the weaknesses we are currently experiencing.

PROPOSED BY: Mark & Elbridge Walker (EF-F19-110)

PROPOSAL 126

5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan.

Close the Central District drift gillnet fishery corridor, as follows:

Close the corridor to commercial fishing for Northbound fish to Upper Cook Inlet.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? With the corridor being closed to commercial fishing the take of the fish headed to the Susitna River system will be minimized. This will allow more fish into the Susitna River and streams up the river system so more people that lived in the Mat-Su Valley are able to fish in their backyards again. This will also rear more fish and in the long run put more fish in the whole of Cook Inlet for all user groups. This is an allocative proposal but it will help all users in the long run.

PROPOSED BY: Neil DeWitt (EF-F19-044)

PROPOSAL 127

5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan.

Amend the *Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan* to allocate 60-80% of northern-bound sockeye and coho salmon harvests to Northern Cook Inlet fisheries, as follows:

5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan. (a) The purpose of this management plan is to ensure adequate escapement of salmon into the Northern District drainages and to provide management guidelines to the department. The department shall manage the commercial drift gillnet fishery to minimize the harvest of Northern District and Kenai River coho salmon in order to provide sport and guided sport fishermen a reasonable opportunity to harvest these salmon stocks over the entire run, as measured by the frequency of inriver restrictions, **and to provide Northern Cook Inlet user groups an allocation of 60-80% of Northern bound Upper Cook Inlet sockeye and coho salmon harvests. Consistent with providing this harvest allocation,** the department shall manage the Central District commercial drift gillnet fishery as follows:

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Central District Drift Gillet Fishery Management Plan, after providing for escapement needs, has provided inadequate passage of Northern sockeye and coho salmon to provide reasonable harvest opportunity for Northern Cook Inlet User Groups. Northern sport, commercial, and personal use fisheries have been restricted and/ or closed and subsistence fisheries have experienced low harvests when the largest share of Northern bound sockeye and coho salmon has been harvested by the Central District drift gill net fishery. Matanuska Valley Advisory Committee, therefore respectfully requests a harvest allocation of Northern bound sockeye and coho salmon to provide shared reasonable harvest opportunity for Northern Cook Inlet user groups.

When considering the proposed allocation, or a board revised allocation level, the committee encourages the board to compare salmon harvests levels of all Upper Cook Inlet user groups.

When determining reasonable harvest opportunity for Northern Cook Inlet users, the advisory committee requests utilization of the Board adopted approach listed in Management Guidelines for Allocating Southeast Alaska Pink, Chum, and Sockeye Salmon Between Commercial Net Fisheries. - From 5 AAC 33.363:

(c) As a general matter, the harvest of fish stocks will be managed primarily for the benefit of the user groups within the district to which those stocks are bound. The board recognizes that biological, social, and economic factors and the current regulatory structure may result in the need to harvest such stocks outside the district for which they are bound.

The committee encourages managers and user groups to provide suggestions how to structure the drift gill net fishery to allow reasonable harvests of Northern sockeye and coho stocks in Northern District waters while maintaining drift harvest levels of Central District sockeye.

PROPOSED BY: Matanuska Valley Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F19-039)

PROPOSAL 128

5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan.

Amend the *Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan* to remove the provision to minimize the commercial harvest of Northern District and Kenai River coho salmon and add a provision for reasonable opportunity for common property fishery harvest, as follows:

5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan. (a) The purpose of this management plan is to ensure adequate escapement of salmon into the Northern District drainages and to provide management guidelines to the department. [THE DEPARTMENT SHALL MANAGE THE COMMERCIAL DRIFT GILLNET FISHERY TO MINIMIZE THE HARVEST OF NORTHERN DISTRICT AND KENAI RIVER COHO SALMON IN ORDER TO PROVIDE SPORT AND GUIDED SPORT FISHERMEN A REASONABLE OPPORTUNITY TO HARVEST THESE SALMON STOCKS OVER THE ENTIRE RUN, AS MEASURED BY THE FREQUENCY OF INRIVER RESTRICTIONS. The department shall also manage the common property fisheries with a reasonable opportunity to harvest salmon resources. The

department shall manage the Central District commercial drift gillnet fishery as described in this section.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Delete unnecessary language in the Cook Inlet salmon management plans that restricts the flexibility for the managers to manage on a real time basis based on in season abundance to harvest the surplus salmon. This language has resulted in tens of millions of harvestable salmon going unharvested and negatively affects the commercial fishing industry, communities, national food source, economies and also decreases future salmon production resulting from the effects of over escapement. The sports fishery has a reasonable opportunity for the fact that salmon run in the thousands of streams in the Cook Inlet drainage from May to October and most all are open to sports fishing. If one system is not open for escapement reasons a sports fisherman has many other system they can fish. In comparison the commercial fisherman, when restricted or closed down, has no other area to fish because they are restricted to the areas and their gear type by their limited entry permit they own. There is unfair and has no parity in reasonable opportunity between commercial and recreational fisheries under the current management plans. There are no conservation concerns on coho and most coho runs are harvested well below acceptable harvest rates, with many harvest being less than 10%.

PROPOSED BY: Central Peninsula Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F19-098)

PROPOSAL 129

5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan.

Allow the commissioner to limit Central District drift gillnets to less than 150 and 200 fathoms in length and 29 meshes in depth, as follows:

Amend the regulation to provide management authority to ADF&G to limit net length to less than 150 and 200 fathoms and net depth to 29 rather than 45 inches.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? By regulation, a commercial drift gillnet in the Central District commercial fishery may not be more than 150 fathoms in length and 45 meshes in depth. The sole exception as specified in 5 AAC 21.333 which allows two Cook Inlet drift gillnet CFEC permit holders to fish concurrently from the same vessel and jointly operate 200 fathoms of drift gillnet gear, and a person holding two permits may operate 200 fathoms of gear. Current regulations do not allow for ADF&G to limit drift gillnets to shorter lengths or depths. This limits the management flexibility to provide for additional fishing opportunities under conditions when a full drift net fishery risks overharvest of specific salmon stocks, particularly during periods of low abundance.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai River Sportfishing Association (HQ-F19-126)

PROPOSAL 130

5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan.

Allow commercial fishing with drift gillnets in the Chinitna Bay subdistrict starting August 15, as follows:

Set an opening date of August 15th for drift fishing in the Chinitna Bay Subdistrict. There is very little directed effort on the chum run before that and by August 15th a majority of the chum run has gone by.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? In recent years, the Chinitna Bay subdistrict has been opened to drift gillnetting only after the department gets an aerial survey of the streams to verify chum escapement. The problem with this approach is that weather has hindered these surveys and the surveys have to be coordinated with lower Inlet surveys. Also, experienced biologists have stated that aerial surveys are the least accurate tool possible for management purposes. This has led to Chinitna Bay remaining closed only because of lack of information. Last year, the department waited so long that there was only a single day of decent fishing as the run had already passed. A large number of very high value coho went unharvested because the fishery wasn't open yet.

PROPOSED BY: Teague Vanek (EF-F19-009)

PROPOSAL 131

5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan.

Remove restrictions to the drift gillnet fishery so that the fishery would occur during two inlet-wide fishing periods per week, as follows:

Remove all restrictions that prohibit Inlet-wide regular openings two days per week throughout the season for drift gillnetting in Cook Inlet. Emergency Order Authority would still be available for the department, should there be conservation concerns in years of low abundance.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The restrictions imposed on the drift fleet, especially for the second half of July, have ruined the orderly harvest of fish and have taken away the opportunity to harvest and profit from abundant salmon stocks. Our primary money fish, Kenai and Kasilof sockeye, have been grossly over-escaped, and many other healthy stocks of all species go practically unharvested or grossly underutilized. That our state, which really needs raw fish taxes and has high unemployment, would allow this resource to go so desperately underutilized is unconscionable.

PROPOSED BY: Teague Vanek (EF-F19-010)

PROPOSAL 132

5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan.

Remove restrictions to the drift gillnet fishery so that the fishery would occur during two inlet-wide fishing periods per week, as follows:

Two twelve-hour openings inlet-wide.

Restricted areas, short notification have added expense and cut production. Drifters ice their fish now. Processors, drifters, and consumers will benefit.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Drift fleet time and area.

If this problem is not solved, there will be cost to fleet, processors, unharvested surplus of multiple species.

PROPOSED BY: John McCombs (HQ-F19-031)

PROPOSAL 133

5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan.

Amend the *Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan* with additional mandatory area restrictions to regular fishing periods, as follows:

The Changes to the existing plan are as follows:

(A)(iv) Drift Gillnet Area 1; [NOTWITHSTANDING THE PROVISIONS OF SUBPARAGRAPH (d)(2)(A) OF THIS SECTION, ONE REGULAR 12-HOUR FISHING PERIOD FROM JULY 16 THROUGH JULY 31 MAY OCCUR IN THE CENTRAL DISTRICT INSTEAD OF IN DRIFT GILLNET AREA 1;]

(e) From August 1 through August 15, [THERE ARE NO MANDATORY AREA RESTRICTIONS TO REGULAR FISHING PERIODS]

(1) fishing during both regular 12 hour fishing periods per week will be restricted to one or more of the following sections and areas: (A) Expanded Kenai Section: (B) Expanded Kasilof Section (C) Anchor Point Section (D) Drift Gillnet Area 1, except that if the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery is closed under 5 AAC 21.310(b)(2)(C)9iii), or the department determines that less than one percent of the seasons total drift gillnet sockeye salmon harvest has been taken per fishing period for two consecutive fishing periods in the drift gillnet fishery, regular fishing periods will be restricted to Drift Gillnet Area 3 and 4. [IN THIS SUBSECTION "FISHING PERIOD" MEANS A TIME PERIOD OPEN TO COMMERCIAL FISHING AS MEASURED BY A 24-HOUR CALENDAR DAY FROM 12:01 AM UNTIL 11:59 P.M.]

(2) additional fishing time under this subsection is allowed only in one or more of the following sections: (A) Expanded Kenai Section: (B) Expanded Kasilof Section: (C) Anchor Point Section.

(f) From August 16 until closed by emergency order, Drift Gillnet Areas 3 and 4 are open for fishing during regular fishing periods.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Amend the *Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan* in order to increase passage of salmon into the Northern District. This proposal would eliminate the option for a District wide opening during the July 16 through July 31 period and would further replace District wide openings from August 1 through August 15 with more restricted fishing opportunities.

PROPOSED BY: Mat-Su Borough Fish and Wildlife Commission/Mike Wood (HQ-F19-046)

PROPOSAL 134

5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan.

Add Drift Gillnet Area 1 to the list of sections that are allowed to be fished during additional fishing time July 16–31 in the *Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan*, as follows:

5 AAC 21.353.(d)(4) additional fishing time under this subsection is allowed only in one or more of the following sections:

- (A) Expanded Kenai Section **and Area 1**;
- (B) Expanded Kasilof Section **and Area 1**;
- (C) Anchor Point Section **or Area 1**.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? This proposed change would add Area 1 to the Expanded Kenai, Kasilof and Anchor Point sections. This provides some additional areas to harvest salmon. At this time of the year, there are harvestable surpluses of sockeye, chum and pink salmon.

PROPOSED BY: United Cook Inlet Drift Association (HQ-F19-076)

PROPOSAL 135

5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan.

Allow one additional regular fishing period in the Central District drift gillnet fishery July 24–31, as follows:

5 AAC 21.353 (d)(2)(A)(iv) Drift Gillnet Area 1; notwithstanding the provisions of subparagraph (d)(2)(A) of this section, **two** [ONE] regular 12-hour fishing periods from July **24** [16] through July 31 may occur in the Central District instead of Drift Gillnet Area 1.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? In recent years, the drift gillnet fleet has been restricted to two regular opening in Drift Gillnet Area 1 during the July 16-31 time frame. This proposal would provide for one additional, inlet-wide opening per week.

By late July, the northern-bound sockeye and coho are north of the Central District. There are harvestable sockeye, chum and pink salmon stocks available.

In even years, by July 20-22 the pink salmon stocks are entering the Kenai River. There are harvestable surpluses of chum and pink salmon available in the Central District.

PROPOSED BY: United Cook Inlet Drift Association (HQ-F19-077)

Cook Inlet Pink Salmon Management Plan (2 proposals)

PROPOSAL 136

5 AAC 21.354. Cook Inlet Pink Salmon Management Plan.

Open two additional inlet-wide fishing periods per week between July 24 and August 15 in even-numbered years, as follows:

5 AAC 21.354. Cook Inlet Pink Salmon Management Plan. (a) The purpose of this management plan is to allow for harvest of surplus pink salmon in the Upper Subdistrict for set gillnet and drift gillnet gear. Notwithstanding 5 AAC 21.310(B)(2)(C)(iii), from **July 24** [AUGUST 11] through August 15, the commissioner **shall** [MAY], by emergency order, open a commercial pink salmon fishery in an even-numbered year for [UP TO] two **additional** [REGULAR] 12-hour fishing periods **inlet-wide per week** if the commissioner determines that sockeye salmon escapement goals in the Kenai **or** [AND] Kasilof Rivers **will be** [ARE BEING] achieved and coho salmon run strength is sufficient to withstand additional harvest.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? By July 20-22 in even numbered years, there are multiple surpluses of pink salmon stocks available.

PROPOSED BY: United Cook Inlet Drift Association (HQ-F19-080)

PROPOSAL 137

5 AAC 21.354. Cook Inlet Pink Salmon Management Plan.

Repeal and readopt the *Cook Inlet Pink Salmon Management Plan* to manage for commercial priority and 40–70% exploitation rate, as follows:

Delete 5 AAC 21.354 [(a) (b) (c) (1) (2)] Replace with: **(a) The department shall manage the Cook Inlet pink salmon stocks primarily for commercial uses to provide an economic yield from the harvest of these salmon resources based on abundance. The department should strive for a harvest rate in the accepted 40% to 70% range for exploitation.**

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The current pink salmon management plan does not allow the managers the flexibility to manage for harvesting the pink salmon harvestable surplus. Literally tens of millions of pinks are not allowed to be harvested under the current management plans. Under the current management plans less than 2% of the pink salmon runs are harvested. ADF&G data shows the Cook Inlet has had even year returns of up to 40 million pinks. That is a lot of food and economic resource not being utilized.

PROPOSED BY: Central Peninsula Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F19-097)

Drift Gillnet Fishing Periods, Closed Waters, and Gear (4 proposals)

PROPOSAL 138

5 AAC 21.320. Weekly fishing periods.

Establish drift gillnet weekly fishing periods in the Chinitna Bay Subdistrict, as follows:

(A) in the Chinitna Bay Subdistrict [ONLY DURING PERIODS ESTABLISHED BY EMERGENCY ORDER] **starting August 15 salmon may be taken from 7:00 a.m. Tuesday until 7:00 p.m. Tuesday and from 7:00 a.m. Friday until 7:00 p.m. Friday.**

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Chinitna Bay is unique in the fact that it is managed by Upper Cook Inlet commercial fisheries management biologist yet the aerial surveys are conducted by Lower Cook Inlet commercial fisheries management biologist and funded in the lower Cook Inlet commercial fisheries budget. Aerial surveys for Chinitna Bay are conducted in conjunction with surveys in the Kamishak Bay district and are therefore dependent upon weather and budget. Weather in the Kamishak Bay district and Chinitna Bay are well known to be unfavorable starting in August and continuing unfavorable until May. Heavy rains this time of year muddy the water making salmon counts from aerial survey impossible. The Department's budget continually receives less money for aerial surveys. In some years Chinitna Bay never gets an aerial survey and the fishery occurring after August 15 is delayed until after the majority of the run is over, even though escapements have been met and there were abundant harvestable surpluses available. There is a precedent established from past years management practices that opened the fishery August 15 when weather or budget prevented aerial surveys of Clear Creek. August 15 is a date the chum salmon run into Clear Creek is considered over. In order to have a reliable fishery and allow the harvest of the surplus salmon, Chinitna Bay needs to be open starting August 15.

PROPOSED BY: Central Peninsula Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F19-104)

PROPOSAL 139

5 AAC 21.350. Closed waters.

Close the drift gillnet salmon fishery in Chinitna Bay, as follows:

Close the commercial drift fishery in Chinitna Bay for up to 3 years.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Chum, Pink, & coho salmon runs in Chinitna bay have been very poor the last several years, the fish need time to rebound.

PROPOSED BY: Mel Erickson (EF-F19-025)

PROPOSAL 140

5 AAC 21.333. Requirements and specifications for use of 200 fathoms of drift gillnet in the Cook Inlet Area.

Allow a dual-permit vessel to have 200 fathoms of gear on board while in Chinitna Bay subdistrict, but fish with no more than 150 fathoms of gear in the subdistrict at any time, as follows:

5 AAC 21.333(e)(l) is amended to read:

(e) The operation of additional drift gillnet gear is not allowed when drift gillnet gear is restricted to any of the following areas:

- (1) Chinitna Bay Subdistrict;

(i) Notwithstanding 5 AAC 39.240(a), in Chinitna Bay, up to 200 fathoms of drift gillnet gear may be aboard a vessel, but not more than 150 fathoms of drift gillnet gear may be operated at any time.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Dual-permit (D-boat) fishing for drift gillnet vessels in Upper Cook Inlet (UCI) was first authorized by the board in 2008. Currently, two Cook Inlet drift gillnet CFEC permit holders fishing from the same vessel, or one person holding two Cook Inlet drift gillnet CFEC permits, may operate 50 fathoms of additional drift gillnet gear, but no more than 200 fathoms total. Currently, the Chinitna Bay Subdistrict and the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area (KRSHA) are two regions where D-boat fishing is not allowed. At the 2017 board meeting, the provision limiting the amount of gear on board while in the KRSHA was repealed, however, the limit on the amount of gear that may be fished in the KRSHA was not changed. Because D-boat fishing is not allowed in Chinitna Bay, any dual-permit drift fisherman who wishes to fish there must remove one shackle of gear (50 fathoms) off the boat completely before fishing to comply with 5 AAC 39.240 (a), which states that a vessel shall have aboard only one legal limit of salmon fishing gear. The Chinitna Bay subdistrict is often opened by emergency order on Tuesdays and Fridays after the chum salmon SEG in Clearwater Creek has been met. The Chinitna Bay drift gillnet opener often occurs after August 16th when Drift Gillnet Areas 3 and 4 are open on Mondays and Thursdays by regulation. D-boat fishing is allowed in Drift Gillnet Areas 3 & 4. Thus if a D-boat fishes in Drift Gillnet Area 3 or 4 on Monday, the vessel permit holder(s) must completely remove 50 fathoms of gear off their boat in order to fish in Chinitna Bay on Tuesday. The Chinitna Bay gear restriction unnecessarily limits the amount of gear dual-permit fishermen may have aboard in Chinitna Bay when traveling to the west side of UCI to take advantage of back to back fishing periods.

This proposal seeks to allow a dual-permit vessel to have 200 fathoms of gear on board while in Chinitna Bay subdistrict, but fish with no more than 150 fathoms of gear in the subdistrict at anytime.

PROPOSED BY: Dan Anderson

(HQ-F19-004)

PROPOSAL 141

5 AAC 21.331. Gillnet specifications and operations; and 5 AAC 21.333. Requirements and specifications for use of 200 fathoms of drift gillnet in the Cook Inlet Area.

Allow a vessel to carry more than a legal complement of gillnet gear in the Cook Inlet Area, as follows:

Add (j) to 5 AAC 21.331. Therefore 5 AAC 21.331 (j) would read:

(j) Notwithstanding 5 AAC 39.240, a vessel can have more than a legal complement of gear on board, but at no time can fish more than a legal complement of gear.

Add (h) to 5 AAC 21.333. Therefore 5 AAC 21.333 (h) would read:

(h) Notwithstanding 5 AAC 39.240, a vessel can have more than a legal complement of gear on board, but at no time can fish more than a legal complement of gear.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? 5 AAC 39.240 is not pertinent of real situations that have and will happen in the Cook Inlet salmon fishery. The drift fishery encompasses a large water body that is comprised of numerous stick rips, large tides, rocks, sand bars and bad foul weather. There are times when a vessel is compromised and not able to retrieve their gear. In these situations, good Samaritan vessels will assist and retrieve the vessels gear and tow the vessel in or pick up survivors from sunken vessels. If this retrieval of gear did not occur it would become a preventable floating hazard in the ocean, which is not good for the environment or navigation. Under the current 5 AAC 39.240 provision a good Samaritan vessel retrieving a compromised vessels gear is being illegal and could be heavily fined subject to the court.

Some actual examples of past compromised vessels whose gear was retrieved by good Samaritan vessels are: 1. Vessels have sunk. 2. Vessels have been beached on shore or sand bars because of foul weather or mechanical failures. 3. Vessels have gotten sucked into stick rips and fouled their props preventing maneuverability to retrieve their gear. 4. Vessels hydraulics or other mechanical equipment has failed, rendering their net retrieval to be impossible, especially in foul weather.

These incidents are not numerous but they have and will happen again. Another example of the need to amend 5 AAC 39.240 is the fact that the current Upper Cook Inlet management plans allow different components of gear for different areas. Some of these areas are 70 mile round trip travel from the east shore. The east shore is the nearest area with harbors and docks to unload gear. A D-boat that has two permits on board, and is allowed to fish four shackles of gear, would be prevented from fishing Chinitna Bay if they fished area 3 or 4 with four shackles unless they traveled the 70 miles round trip to unload one shackle because Chinitna Bay only allows three shackle to be fished.

The Kasilof River terminal fishery vessels normally have a specially designed net which is shallower, smaller mesh size and stronger web for this shallow water fishery that tears up net. Many times this area will be open in conjunction with the expanded corridor. A vessel fishing the terminal area, who discovered the fishing wasn't any good, would have to go to the dock, unload the special terminal net, put on his regular net in order to efficiently fish the corridor. This is wasting valuable fishing time especially when most openers are only 12 hours. These amendments will not be an enforcement issue because only the legal component of gear would be in the water. There are hundreds of boats on the water that will turn in any violators. Violators will fish illegally no matter what the law is, but that is no reason to not pass these amendments that protect the practice of the good Samaritan in helping fellow fishermen.

PROPOSED BY: Central Peninsula Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F19-100)

Cook Inlet Coho Salmon Management Plan (1 proposal)

PROPOSAL 142

5 AAC 21.xxx. New section.

Create a commercial set gillnet fishery for coho salmon in the Upper Subdistrict, as follows:

Implement a new management plan, as follows:

5 AAC 21.xxx

The purpose of this management plan is to provide a small commercial coho salmon fishery for set gillnets in the Upper Subdistrict of Upper Cook Inlet. If Kenai and Kasilof river king and sockeye salmon escapement goals have been achieved, or are projected to be achieved, and notwithstanding 5 AAC 21.360(a), the fishery will be managed as follows:

(1) The fishery will occur from August 16 through September 30;

(2) Fishing periods will occur on Mondays and Thursdays;

(3) Fishing periods will be from 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m.;

(4) The fishery will close when the harvest reaches 10,000 coho salmon or September 30, whichever occurs first.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? I would like the board to consider a commercial coho fishery, for the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery. This fishery would take place from August 16 to September 30. With a limit of 10,000 coho salmon, the season closure would happen if and when the limit is reached or September 30, whichever comes first.

PROPOSED BY: Chris Every

(HQ-F19-018)
