

RC for PROPOSAL 93 – Manage the Kenai River PU dip net fishery subject to achieving the inriver goal, and establish paired restrictions

RC prepared by Nathan Hoff for a proposal proposed by Nathan Hoff

I have prepared this RC to respond to the comments submitted by the Alaskan Department of Fish and Game and intend on using THESE additions as my introduction to the proposal. I greatly appreciate how this system works. They having taken the time to review my proposal and make these comments enabling me to engage in a “conversation” which is... really helpful. Good system, and I thank them.

- 1) Management would become complex since paired restrictions with commercial fisheries would result in closures and re-openings of the PU dip net fishery throughout the dipnet season.

1 answered - Potentially “opening and reclosing” is the very definition of managing... for what many people have come to see as a completely unmanaged fishery. This particular proposal seeks to clarify WHY the PU fishery is being managed or unmanaged however one chooses to describe it with no regard to the IN-RIVER GOAL for sockeye. It has been my understanding that the sport (local and tourism) aspect of the Kenai system is what makes an In-River goal desirable?

- 2) Opening at 7 AM instead of 6 AM.... OOPS! I would suggest the closure begin at 6 AM on Friday. P.S. you spelled my name incorrectly. It is Nathan Hoff, not Nathan Holf. :)

- 3) Fishing time would decrease

3 answered- Decrease? There is a management objective for In-River goals which the PU fishery is being encouraged to simply ignore. Fish grow to the size of the tank they are placed into.

- 4) PU participants may have limited opportunity as this proposal requests that PU closures be implemented on weekends.

4 answered - There are currently windows, etc. in place for the commercial fishery alongside an In-river goal that are designed to allow more fish In-river. One mid-week and one on Friday. Out of this the idea of a regular period... Monday and Thursday originates? This proposal rather than the afore-mentioned limited opportunity grants PU participants MAXIMUM OPPORTUNITY. It does not limit their participation IMMEDIATELY upon a commercial closure, but allows a PU fishery to continue throughout the week. The proposal is intended to state that IF fish numbers are demonstrated to be such a low amount that regular periods in the commercial fishery are closed by EO the PU fishery should have a heads up that the sport (local and tourism) aspect of the Kenai system is falling under neglect. Any participant in the PU fishery already has a sports license to target fish anywhere in the State on that weekend and until the PU fishery should reopen, so it should really have ZERO impact even on travel plans. Travelers may not all choose to camp out on the beach; local businesses, particularly campgrounds, lodges, etc. may see an increased benefit.

5)20,000- 73,000 per each 3-day closure Friday – Sunday

5 answered – Fish and Game has shared potential captures over a 3- day period for the dipnet fishery on the Kenai River. I am not sure if my proposal is unclear, but I do not intend the closure to somehow specifically penalize the weekend? Or be just over the weekend. The commercial fisheries were closed for many consecutive days in 2018. The closure would simply begin on Friday at 6 am. This would lead to orderly closures, because if the commercial fishery was restricted during the week, ALASKA et. al. would know it. People would know the runs were weak. They could anticipate the closure in the dipnet fishery at the prescribed time until the runs improved as indicated by the resumption of a regular commercial opening.

6) This may result in an increase in the harvest of sockeye salmon in other fisheries, primarily the commercial fishery depending on abundance and run-timing. The City of Kenai would experience decreased revenue obtained from user fees collected from the PU fishery.

6 answered – why was the commercial fishery specifically pointed out? We are speaking primarily to an In-River goal so In-River users obviously remain the primary beneficiary. I have heard it said at these meeting that “we are all businessmen”. Again, I think it odd to highlight the City of Kenai, which has other revenue sources as opposed to say the commercial fisheries, the processing plants, the guide services and lodges and all the rest of the businesses IN and around Kenai that are... hopeful for salmon.

Department Comments- HYPER RATIONALIZED Fisheries – BOO!! It is telling of our regulations that the Fish and Game Managers appear unclear as to whether or not they may have restricted the commercial fishery from fishing Kenai stocks in order to achieve an In-river goal. I may have been unclear. I meant regular periods... Monday. Thursday. Drift Net. Set Net. Is that not a thing? To be truly clear about the intentions, and for everyone to feel that they were being treated fairly, 600 foot and 1/2mile would have to be treated as regular periods... which they de facto seem to be becoming, which is why I hope the BOF considers allocating to the fishermen disenfranchised by any such regulations.

Into the Future - If the participants in the PU fisheries feel that their contribution to the fishery is significant enough and trumps In-river sportfishing goals, let the participants of that fishery decide to make the future case that the Kenai system ought to be regulated by an SEG or some other metric rather than the In-River Goals currently in place. PU should be treated no differently than commercial use, as made crystal clear by the fact that an equal or greater amount of commercially caught salmon is being sold into the South Central Region as that being harvested in the PU fishery.