PROPOSAL 283 – 5 AAC 21.359. Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan.

- The recent closure of the Cook Inlet EEZ to commercial drift fleet was not discussed during the BOF meeting when the current Kenai River Late Run King Salmon Management Plan was modified. The UCI drift fleet had access to substantially more fishing area in 2021 than they will in 2022. This will only further increase the amount of harvestable surplus sockeye bound for both the Kenai and Kasilof Rivers.
- UCI is without a doubt a complicated, dynamic mixed stock fishery that encompasses many different user groups. Which is why we should not sacrifice future yields of the Kenai River and Kasilof River sockeye returns if we are achieving our biological, science based escapement goal for Kenai River Late-Run King salmon.
- Since 2012 ADFG and BOF members have asked the ESSN to come to the table with ways to prosecute their fishery for minimal chinook harvest during these times of low abundance. Since then reduced number of nets per permit, time, area, and net depths, have all been implemented.
- The past several seasons we have sat on the beach watching abundant sockeye go by, while every other user group has been granted some opportunity. Proposal 283 gives ESSN some limited opportunity to participate in their fishery.
- Proposal 283 simply seeks to provide the Alaska Department of Fish and Game with an additional tool to harvest surplus sockeye salmon bound for the Kenai and Kasilof Rivers with set gillnet gear once the SEG of 13,500 Kenai River late-run king salmon has been met.

Chinook Harvest in 600ft Fishery

8

Year	#Openings	ALL King Salmon Harvested	Kenai River Main Stem Stock Composition relative to all fish PG.142 staff Comments	LARGE King Salmon Harvested	LARGE King Salmon harvested per opening	Total Sockeye Harvested 600ft openers
2015	6	224	0.36	81	14	N/A
2018	6	115	0.24	28	5	40,457
2019	3	21	0.27	6	2	16,311
2020	7	44	0.19	9	1	23,741
2021	8	139	0.17	24	3	71,640

When utilized by the department the ESSN 600ft fishery is proving to be an effective management tool for harvesting an abundance of sockeye while minimizing large chinook harvest.

Table 283.6. Harvest of king salmon in those periods limited to within 600 feet from shore, PG 144 Staff Comments and Table 283.4.–Large fish (≥75 cm mid eye to tail fork [METF]) stock compositions PG 142

RC 082

History of ESSN 600ft Fishery

- In 2015 the Kasilof Section was limited to fishing within 600 feet from mean high tide mark for the first time ever. The 600 foot fisheries were opened to focus harvest on Kasilof River Sockeye salmon while limiting the harvest of Kenai River Chinook salmon. (Upper Cook Inlet Commercial Fisheries Annual Management Report, 2015 pg.15)
- At 2017 Upper Cook Inlet Board of Fish the North K-Beach 600 foot fishery was established to help control Kasilof River sockeye and to minimize the use of the Kasilof Terminal Harvest Area.
- At 2020 Upper Cook Inlet Board of Fish a 600 foot fishery was developed for Salamantof and East Forelands sections. This fishery has been used 1 time ever and that was in 2021.

Kenai River Late-run Chinook Salmon Goals

- 1999-2012 SEG 17,800 - 35,700 ALL sizes of chinook
- 2013-2016 SEG 15,000 - 30,000 ALL sizes of chinook
- 2017- Current SEG 13,500 - 27,000 Large fish
- 2020 Board Developed OEG 15,000 - 30,000 Large fish

The Kenai River Late-Run chinook goals and plans have seen some TREMENDOUS changes in the last several board cycles. SEG is developed by ADF&G using biological data. An OEG is an allocative goal set by the board of fish.

Year	Sonar Count	Inriver Goal	Met/Exceeded
2011	1,599,217	1,100,000-1,350,000	Exceeded
2012	1,581,555	1,100,000-1,350,000	Exceeded
2013	1,359,893	1,000,000-1,200,000	Exceeded
2014	1,520,340	1,000,000-1,200,000	Exceeded
2015	1,709,051	1,000,000-1,200,000	Exceeded
2016	1,383,692	1,100,000-1,350,000	Exceeded
2017	1,308,498	1,000,000-1,300,000	Exceeded
2018	1,035,761	900,000-1,100,000	Met
2019	1,849,054	1,000,000-1,300,000	Exceeded
2020	1,714,565	1,000,000-1,200,000	Exceeded
2021	2,441,825	900,000-1,100,000	Exceeded

Exceeding Kenai River Inriver Sockeye Goals

In 2021 the Kenai River Sockeye Sonar Count was 2,441,825

The Inriver Goal was Exceeded by 1,341,825 sockeye on a 3.8 million run.

Table 283.2. Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon escapement data 1990–2021.

Fighting to remain viable - ESSN Sockeye Harvest

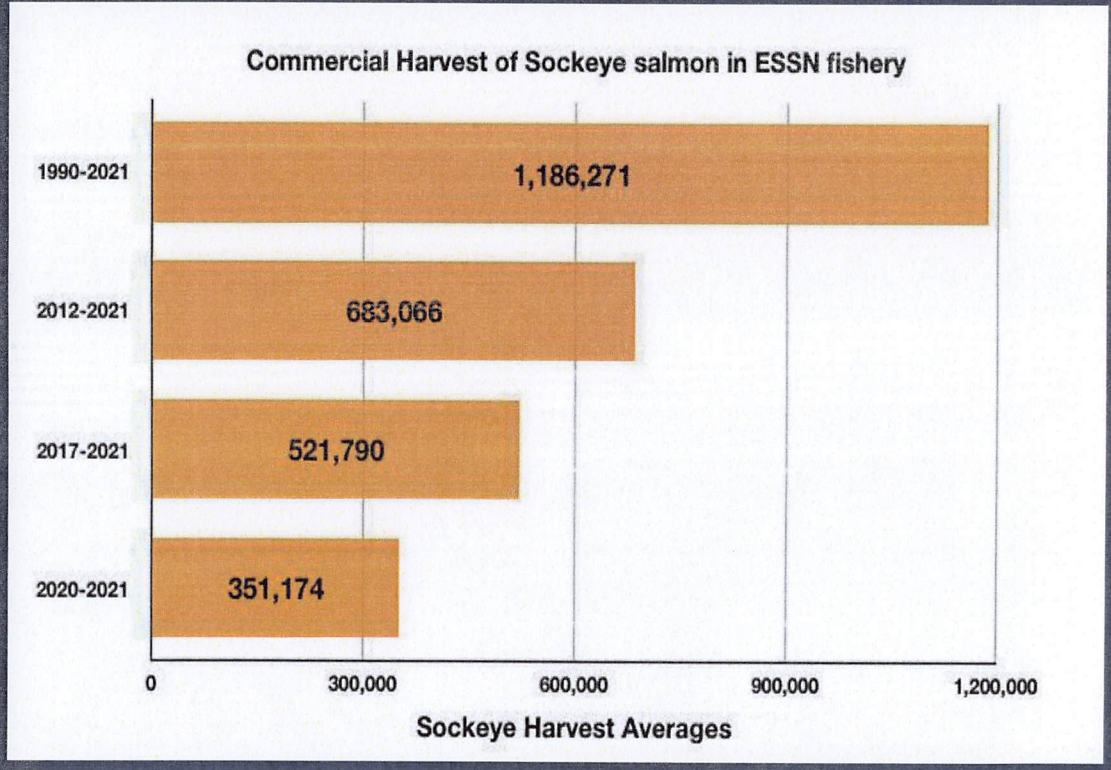
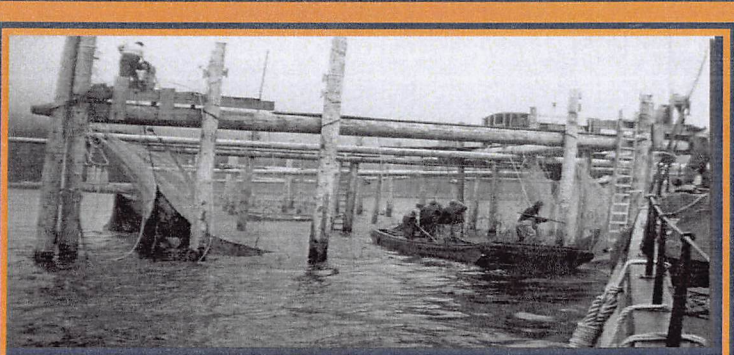


Table 283.5. Commercial harvest of salmon in the ESSN fishery. Pg 143 staff comments

EASTSIDE SETNET HISTORY



For over 150 years these salmon have been feeding people both locally and all over the world. This rich, renewable resource was first exported in the 1840's when ships from America and other nations began fishing in Alaskan waters and delivering salted salmon to ports around the world.

The first cannery in Cook Inlet was built at the mouth of the Kasilof River in 1882. Six years later the first salmon cannery was constructed on Kenai River. By 1892, thirty-seven canneries had been built in Alaska.

Gillnets had been used to some degree in the silty waters of Cook Inlet from the beginning. After fish traps were outlawed, independent fishermen caught the salmon for the canneries with gillnets.

FEEDING ALASKANS FEEDING THE WORLD

For generations, Upper Cook Inlet fisherman have helped feed the world a natural and healthy protein

80% of Upper Cook Inlet Setnetters are Alaskan residents

PROPOSAL 283 – 5 AAC 21.359. Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan.

Amber & Travis Every
Eastside Setnetters- N. K-Beach

2022

Presentation to Alaska Board of Fisheries