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Politics should not replace fisheries management based on sound and current science. However the current science used by ADFG is lacking.

Based on ADFG's own studies they admit they are unable to determine accurately which CWK chum are harvested in area M in June through August. Area M caught 12.8% CWK fish (103,798 total fish) of the total chum harvest.

*However we don't know how many of these are bound for Yukon/Kuskokwim*  
ADFG is still "unable to identify the Yukon, Kuskokwim

and Nushagak rivers separately despite using thousands of genetic markers." Bristol Bay harvested 301,816 chum salmon in a 6 week fishery, roughly three times the amount of Area M's CWK harvest in a 3 month fishery.

The issue here is that because ADFG's current science is inadequate Area M is taking the brunt of fish politics ~~science while Bristol Bay faces no repercussions.~~ How do we know who is catching Yukon and Kuskokwim chum?

The answer is we don't. ADFG can not tell whether the chum harvested in Bristol Bay are destined for the Yukon or Kuskokwim. ADFG can not tell whether the CWK chum harvested in area M are destined for the Yukon or Kuskokwim or Bristol Bay.

It is likely that many of the chum harvested in Bristol Bay are bound for the relatively nearby river systems of the Yukon and Kuskokwim. During the 2022 season the chum

harvest in the Nushagak district was greater than ADFG's minimum chum escapement goal meaning Bristol Bay managers failed to properly manage for chum escapement.

The problem with all proposals to reduce fishing time in June is that they assume that Area M is the only fishery that incidentally harvests Yukon and Kuskokwim chum salmon. Until a study is conducted that can determine whether Bristol Bay is harvesting Yukon and Kuskokwim chum stocks the board should not accept any proposal that places the entire burden of managing Yukon and Kuskokwim chum returns on Area M. The end result of accepting any proposal to reduce fishing time will be highly uncertain until science improves. We need a lot more studies before any decision is made that would be devastating to the communities and stakeholders of Area M.