

Lower Cook Inlet Proposals

December 1st-December 4th, 2026

Seward, AK

Comment Deadline:

November 16th, 2026



PROPOSAL 1

5 AAC 58.057. Lower Cook Inlet summer saltwater king salmon sport fishery.

Establish a priority for Alaska residents and other management provisions for the Lower Cook Inlet saltwater king salmon sport fishery, as follows:

- (f) When the department determines that conservation concerns exist for Cook Inlet king salmon stocks, or that the guideline harvest level (GHL) is projected to be reached or exceeded, the commissioner may, by emergency order, implement management actions to achieve conservation objectives and provide a priority opportunity for Alaska residents.

Management actions may include one or more of the following measures, implemented in the order listed unless the commissioner determines that an alternative sequence is necessary to meet conservation objectives:

- (1) **Nonresident harvest reductions.** Reduce the bag, possession, or annual limits for nonresident sport fishing participants;
- (2) **Guided sport fishery restrictions.** Prohibit a sport fishing guide or sport fishing guide crewmember from retaining king salmon while providing guide services, or while a client is present or under the guide's supervision or control;
- (3) **Size-based retention limits.** Restrict retention to king salmon of a minimum size of 28 inches in length;
- (4) **Resident harvest reductions (last step).** Reduce the Alaska resident sport fishing bag and possession limit to one king salmon.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The king salmon bag and possession limit in this fishery has been reduced by emergency order from two fish to one in recent seasons due to concerns about Cook Inlet king salmon abundance and harvest levels. Based on recent management actions and stock performance, similar restrictions are likely to continue into the foreseeable future.

When harvest opportunity is constrained, the Board must determine how limited opportunity is allocated. This proposal asks the Board to establish a clear priority framework that ensures Alaska resident anglers are afforded first opportunity to harvest king salmon when restrictions are imposed.

This approach is not unprecedented. Resident priority is already embedded in the Kodiak saltwater king salmon management plan (5 AAC 64.060) and the Southeast Alaska king salmon management plan (5 AAC 47.055). Prohibiting charter vessel captains and crew from harvesting king salmon while guiding is also an established regulation in Upper Cook Inlet and many other areas of Alaska. These examples demonstrate that prioritizing resident opportunity is both feasible and consistent with Alaska's existing regulatory framework.

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game states that "Alaska's fish and game resources belong to Alaskans" and that the department will continue to put the needs of Alaska's citizens first. This proposal seeks to ensure that Cook Inlet king salmon management reflects that principle in practice, particularly during periods of reduced harvest opportunity.

Alaska residents rely on king salmon not only for recreation, but also to supplement household food needs and maintain long-standing cultural and community traditions. Over the past decade, the Homer charter fleet has expanded significantly, and the sportfish harvest by non-resident anglers has increased accordingly. Under the current management approach, Cook Inlet residents are subject to the same harvest restrictions as non-residents, even as non-resident participation and harvest have grown. In 2024, non-resident sportfish anglers accounted for more than 50 percent of the king salmon harvest in this fishery.

In other regions of Alaska, the Board has recognized that resident anglers warrant priority access when harvest opportunity becomes limited. Southeast Alaska has operated under this principle for decades, and Kodiak has recently amended its management plan to reflect the same priority. Similar allocation considerations influence management of other species, including rockfish, lingcod, sablefish, sablefish, and crab.

This proposal does not seek to increase overall harvest or compromise conservation objectives. Instead, it seeks to ensure that when conservation-driven restrictions are necessary, the remaining opportunity is allocated in a manner that reflects Alaska’s long-standing policy, existing regulatory precedents, and the unique reliance of Alaska residents on state resources. Establishing a resident-priority framework in Cook Inlet would provide clarity, fairness, and consistency in future management decisions while maintaining the Board’s conservation mandate.

PROPOSED BY: Cook Inlet Recreational Fisherman (CIRF), Pete Zimmerman, Spokesperson
(EF-F27-002)

PROPOSAL 2

5 AAC 58.022. Waters; seasons; bag, possession, annual, and size limits; and special provisions for Cook Inlet – Resurrection Bay Saltwater Area.

Amend the date for the June youth only fishery in the Nick Dudiak Fishing Lagoon, as follows:

A person 16 years of age or older may not sport fish in the Homer Spit youth fishery zone, established by ADF&G regulatory markers to include a portion of the Nick Dudiak Fishing Lagoon, during designated youth fishery days, which occur on the **second** [FIRST] Saturday in June and the first Saturday in August;

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Currently, the youth only fishery for king salmon in the Nick Dudiak Fishing Lagoon occurs on the first Saturday in June. King salmon returns to the Nick Dudiak Lagoon have progressed later and the current date typically falls within the first half of the run when very few king salmon are present in the lagoon. Delaying the youth only fishery to the second Saturday in June will provide more time for the king salmon run to accumulate in the lagoon and is more likely to provide better fishing opportunity for youth anglers.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

(EF-F27-258)

PROPOSAL 3

5 AAC 58.022. Wares; seasons; bag, possession, annual, and size limits; and special provisions for Cook Inlet- Resurrection Bay Saltwater Area.

Remove the annual limit requirement for king salmon in the Nick Dudiak Fishing Lagoon as follows:

Exempt King salmon caught in the Nick Dudiak Homer Lagoon from the combined annual limit of 5 King salmon 20 inches or longer, as follows:

This stocking program is considered a terminal fishery with no freshwater or spawning habitat for salmon and all fish need to be harvested. Since this is a terminal fishery which also permits snagging at specified times, it seems counterintuitive to require King salmon caught in this fishery be included in the combined annual limit of 5 king salmon. This fishery also already allows a Daily Limit of 2 per day, 2 in possession, no size limit which is unlike any other area in Southcentral Alaska. King salmon runs are essentially non-fishable in most of Southcentral Alaska yet we are still required to purchase a King stamp. For the above reasons, it does not seem to make much sense to require King salmon caught in the Nick Dudiak Homer Lagoon to be recorded as harvest on the combined annual limit of 5 King salmon.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?

The requirement to tag King salmon caught in the Nick Dudiak Fishing Lagoon on the combined annual limit of 5 king salmon 20 inches or longer from the waters of the following areas: Cook Inlet Salt Waters, West Cook Inlet, Susitna River Drainage, Knik Arm, Anchorage Bowl, Kenai River, and Kenai Peninsula.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Conversation with other Alaska residents.

PROPOSED BY: Rob Boyer

(EF-F27-182)

PROPOSAL 4

5 AAC 56.130. Anchor River, Deep Creek, and Ninilchik River king salmon sport fishery management plan.

Establish a large fish goal for Ninilchik River king salmon as follows:

Establish a large fish goal for king salmon 28" or greater. Allow F1 hatchery-origin females to contribute to the natural-spawning escapement at a PNI of 0.7 or greater. See below.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?

Boost natural production in Ninilchik River by modifying escapement goals and hatchery practices. See below.

King salmon productivity in Upper Cook Inlet continues to languish because of a chinook-hostile ocean. Returns to Ninilchik River have been so poor that adult recruitment fails to adequately replace the parental spawners that produced them in the first place. Ocean conditions currently favor younger, smaller, and "maler" salmon. Sex ratios have been so skewed that modern-day sex composition hovers at roughly 20% females of progressively diminishing fecundity.

The undeniable fact is that each hen must recruit FIVE returning spawners to replace itself in the next generation. And the unfortunate reality is that current poor ocean productivity means that on average, the "replacement" hen coming back will be younger, smaller and less fecund than her mother.

Recovery of wild stocks fundamentally starts with eggs in the gravel. No huevos, NO POLLO! Escaping sufficient numbers of large fecund hens is paramount to meaningful stock rebuilding. The current paradigm of an escapement goal based simply on quantity will NOT provide sufficient eggs to jump start recovery. Quantity is NOT enough. We must shoot for a target escapement that emphasizes QUALITY. In a perfect world, we should be striving for a fecundity-based goal that emphasizes eggs in the gravel. But from a pragmatic perspective, specifically achieving that would be extremely challenging.

The closest and most achievable surrogate to a fecundity-based goal is a **large fish goal** that favors a greater proportion of female salmon in the escapement. The current goal counts any king salmon over 20 inches as part of the escapement. I propose a large fish goal based on adults measuring **28 inches or greater**.

Ninilchik River management is further complicated by a hatchery program intended to support recreational harvest opportunity. Brood stock for this integrated hatchery program is derived entirely from natural-origin salmon to maintain genetic integrity and to reduce the genetic risks of hatchery-origin strays spawning naturally on the gravel. Obtaining broodstock becomes particularly problematic when there aren't even enough wild salmon to meet current escapement goals. A major paradigm shift in hatchery management practices is proposed.

Hatchery-origin F1 recruits can be optimally used to serve a **dual** purpose for this integrated stock. 1) Providing harvest opportunity in the recreational fishery, and 2) providing a source of additional fecundity on the gravel to fuel natural production. In this second role, instead of using the F1 hens

to provide brood for assorted out-of-basin hatchery programs, they would play an important part in boosting large spawners on the gravel when while Ninilchik River returns are faltering.

Such a strategy is NOT without its inherent risks. It would be imprudent and irresponsible to simply swamp the gravel with hatchery origin spawners, effectively replacing natural-origin spawners with hatchery fish. To safeguard the genetic integrity of the wild stock, the **proportion of natural origin brood** (pNOB) for the hatchery program should remain at 100%. Additionally, appropriate limits must be placed on the **proportion of hatchery-origin spawners** (pHOS) allowed on the gravel to maintain a **proportionate natural influence (PNI) of 0.7 or greater**, where $PNI = pNOB / pNOB + pHOS$. Said another way, pHOS must be managed such that no more than 43% of the total escapement may be of hatchery-origin.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. Discussed with various ADFG staff and encouraged to submit the proposal.

PROPOSED BY: Francis Estalilla

(EF-F27-242)

PROPOSAL 5

5 AAC 56.122. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area and 5 AAC 56.130. Anchor River, Deep Creek, and Ninilchik River king salmon sport fishery management plan.

Amend management provisions for the Ninilchik River king salmon sport fishery as follows:

Ninilchik River: Sport fishing regulations for Chinook salmon shall be structured to provide harvest opportunity consistent with a hatchery-supported fishery. When hatchery-produced Chinook salmon are present, the department shall manage the fishery to allow retention and use of bait to the extent practicable while still achieving broodstock and escapement objectives.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Ninilchik River supports a hatchery-produced Chinook salmon fishery intended to provide additional sport fishing opportunity on the lower Kenai Peninsula. However, recent restrictions indicate that conservation needs and broodstock requirements are still limiting the fishery. While these constraints are important, they raise the question of whether the fishery is functioning as intended, or whether the balance between conservation and opportunity in a hatchery-supported system needs to be more clearly defined.

Despite the presence of hatchery fish, anglers are experiencing limited access and reduced harvest opportunity similar to mixed-stock or wild-stock fisheries. This creates a situation where hatchery production does not translate into meaningful additional opportunity, which calls into question the effectiveness of the program under current management.

A separate proposal has been submitted addressing the Kasilof River to clarify management priorities in a mixed-stock fishery; together, these proposals highlight the need for consistent alignment between hatchery-supported and mixed-stock Chinook fisheries.

If no change is made, the Ninilchik River will continue to operate as a constrained fishery despite ongoing hatchery production, limiting the intended benefit to anglers and the public.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? This proposal was developed based on personal observation of recent fishery restrictions and review of management actions in hatchery-supported and mixed-stock systems.

PROPOSED BY: Will Lee (EF-F27-045)

PROPOSAL 6

5 AAC 56.130. Anchor River, Deep Creek, and Ninilchik River king salmon sport fishery management plan.

Amend management provisions for the Ninilchik River king salmon fishery by expanding opportunity for hatchery king salmon and adding gear restrictions.

(d)(3) The commissioner may further liberalize or restrict the Ninilchik River hatchery king salmon sport fishery to provide more harvest opportunity or achieve the SEG and broodstock collection goals by emergency order. **This does not include closing the hatchery king salmon sport fishery to meet the wild SEG.**

During the hatchery king salmon season, the Ninilchik River would be open to fishing from its mouth up to the ADF&G weir signage at the Brody Bridge weir. Fishing for hatchery kings will be single hook and no bait.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?

During the 2025 Hatchery King Salmon season, Ninilchik River was closed to fishing, preventing any harvest of hatchery kings by anglers for human consumption. 3,263 hatchery king salmon moved upstream past the Garrison weir with no opportunity for Alaskans to harvest high-quality king salmon for food. Hatchery kings come with a very high production cost, and by closing Ninilchik to hatchery king salmon fishing to Alaskan anglers, these fish are not allowed to be utilized as a quality food source.

Multiple man-hours by the hardworking ADF&G crews were not fully valued, as the majority of the 3,263 hatchery kings were culled and wasted. Streams enhanced with hatchery king salmon, Ninilchik River & Kasilof River, should be allowed to fish for these hatchery king salmon.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Yes

PROPOSED BY: James Stubbs

(EF-F27-173)

PROPOSAL 7

5 AAC 56.122. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area.

Modify the king salmon annual limit in the Ninilchik River, as follows:

With an annual limit of five king salmon **28** [20] inches or greater in length, except as provided in (b) of this section; a harvest record is required as specified in 5 AAC 75.006; a king salmon **28** [20] inches or greater in length that is removed from the water must be retained and becomes part of bag and possession limit of that person originally hooking it;

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?

Proposal: Establish a daily bag limit of two (2) hatchery king salmon measuring greater than 20 inches and less than 28 inches. These fish would not count toward the annual Cook Inlet limit of five (5) king salmon.

Justification: Hatchery-origin king salmon in the 20”–28” size range (commonly referred to as 2-ocean fish) are predominantly male, with estimates of approximately 95% male composition. As such, they are of limited value for spawning escapement.

Currently, many anglers release these fish in favor of retaining larger king salmon (typically over 30”–32”), even though fish in the 20”–28” range provide excellent table quality. This results in underutilization of a significant portion of the hatchery return.

Fish within this size class—excluding jacks—often comprise a substantial portion of the run. Allowing retention of up to two (2) hatchery king salmon in this range would promote more effective harvest of these fish while maintaining opportunity for anglers to pursue larger king salmon exceeding 28 inches.

This regulation would:

- Reduce waste of harvestable hatchery fish that are currently released
- Improve utilization of abundant 2-ocean hatchery kings
- Maintain angler opportunity for larger trophy fish
- Better aligning harvest practices with the biological characteristics of the stock

Conclusion: Increasing the daily bag limit to two (2) hatchery king salmon between 20” and 28” would enhance harvest efficiency, reduce waste, and support more balanced management of hatchery king salmon resources in Cook Inlet.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Yes.

PROPOSED BY: James Stubbs

(EF-F27-171)

PROPOSAL 8

5 AAC 56.122 Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area.

Modify the king salmon bag and possession limits in the Ninilchik River as follows:

The bag and possession limit is two hatchery king salmon, 20 inches or greater in length **and less than 28 inches in length, one hatchery king salmon 28 inches or greater in length**, and 10 hatchery or **naturally-produced** king salmon under 20 inches; naturally-produced king salmon **20 inches or greater in length** may not be retained.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?

Modify the king salmon bag limits in the Ninilchik River to provide more harvest opportunity of hatchery fish and naturally-produced jacks. This would also reduce the waste of hatchery fish that are culled from the escapement. The jack bag limit in the Kasilof River is wild or hatchery.

The daily bag limit for king salmon under 20 inches (“jacks”), including both hatchery and naturally produced fish, should be set at 10 fish per day. This bag limit would apply uniformly to both hatchery and naturally produced jacks.

To standardize regulations across the Ninilchik River and the Kasilof River—both hatchery and enhanced king salmon systems—the regulation should clearly establish a daily limit of 10 king salmon under 20 inches.

This change would help reduce waste by allowing harvest of wild fish under 20 inches that are otherwise not being utilized, despite being high-quality table fare. Additionally, it would reduce confusion among anglers regarding jack retention rules on both rivers.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Yes

PROPOSED BY: James Stubbs

(EF-F27-172)

PROPOSAL 9

5 AAC 56.122. Special Provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area.

Extend the area open to hatchery king salmon and modify the bag and possession limits in the Ninilchik River, as follows:

In the Ninilchik River upstream of ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately two miles upstream of its mouth to the Brody Road bridge and from June 16- July 15; the bag and possession limit is two hatchery king salmon, 20 inches or greater in length and less than 28 inches in length, one hatchery king salmon 28 inches or greater in length, and 10 hatchery or naturally-produced king salmon under 20 inches; naturally-produced king salmon 20 inches or greater in length may not be retained;

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?

PROPOSAL: Open Sport Fishing in the Garrison to Brody Bridge Weir Section of the Ninilchik River

What is the issue you would like the board to address?

The current hatchery king salmon season on the Ninilchik River has been significantly reduced, resulting in limited harvest opportunity (approximately six days). At the same time, a 2.5-mile-long zone between the Garrison weir and the Brody Bridge weir remains closed to angler fishing pressure. This lack of fishing pressure allows a substantial portion of the king salmon run (estimated 30–35%) to hold and spawn within this area.

This creates a management concern because Alaska Department of Fish and Game policy does not allow hatchery-origin king salmon to count towards the SEG in the Ninilchik River.

What solution do you prefer?

Open the approximately 2.5-mile section of the Ninilchik River between the Garrison weir and the Brody Bridge weir to sport fishing during the continuous hatchery king salmon season.

What are the effects if the proposal is adopted?

Allowing sport fishing in this zone would:

- Increase harvest opportunity for hatchery king salmon during a shortened season
- Reduce the number of hatchery-origin fish spawning in the river
- Encourage upstream movement of king salmon toward the Brody Bridge weir
- Improve efficiency of egg take and culling operations
- Allow wild fish to pass upstream with reduced interference from hatchery fish

Additionally, sport fishing occurs primarily in June, while spawning in this area occurs in August, so there would be no conflict with spawning activity.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Yes

PROPOSED BY: James Stubbs

(EF-F27-174)

PROPOSAL 10

5 AAC 56.122. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area.

Extend the restrictions on bait and multiple hooks in Lower Kenai Peninsula roadside streams until the end of July, as follows:

5 AAC 56.122 is amended to read:

(a)(2) Anchor River drainage, except the Bridge Creek reservoir:

(A) only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used

(i) from July 1 – July [15] **31** and from September 1 – October 31 from its mouth upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 200 yards upstream of the Old Sterling Highway Bridge;

(a)(5) Deep Creek drainage:

(A) only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used

(i) from July 1 – July [15] **31** and from September 1 – October 31 from its mouth upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately two miles upstream;

(a)(10) Stariski Creek drainage:

(A) only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used

(i) from July 1- July [15] **31** and September 1 – October 31 from its mouth upstream to the Sterling Highway Bridge;

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Currently, bait is allowed in the Lower Kenai Peninsula roadside streams by regulation during the dates open to king salmon fishing and from July 15 through August 31. Bait is primarily used by anglers in these streams while fishing for king and coho salmon. Due to progressively later king salmon run timing, approximately 20% of the king salmon run has entered these streams after July 15 in recent years. This proposal would prohibit the use of bait and multiple hooks during the last two weeks in July when a substantial portion of the king salmon run is staged and preparing to spawn. Anglers typically target Dolly Varden during this time, and most do not use bait.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

(EF-F27-259)

PROPOSAL 11

5 AAC 56.120 General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area and 5 AAC 57.120 General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area. and 5 AAC 59.120 General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Anchorage Bowl Drainages Area and 5 AAC 60.120 General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Knik Arm Drainages Area and 5 AAC 61.110. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Susitna River Drainage Area and 5 AAC 62.120 General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the West Cook Inlet Area.

Prohibit catch and release fishing for king salmon and the removal of king salmon from the water in Cook Inlet freshwater, as follows:

(Boards Support Note: This proposal will be heard and public testimony will be taken at both the LCI and UCI meetings and deliberated at the UCI meeting)

- Write into regulation that when retention of king salmon is closed in Cook Inlet freshwaters, intentional targeting and catch-and-release fishing for king salmon are also prohibited.
- Keep the immediate-release requirement for incidental catches and make clear that incidentally hooked kings may not be removed from the water.
- Reduce reliance on repeated emergency-order language by creating a standing conservation rule.

Draft regulatory language:

When retention of king salmon is closed by regulation or emergency order in a freshwater drainage of the Cook Inlet Area, a person may not intentionally target king salmon. During such a closure, catch-and-release fishing for king salmon is prohibited. A king salmon incidentally caught while lawfully fishing for another species may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? When Kenai, Kasilof, and other Cook Inlet king salmon runs are weak, the department frequently must issue emergency orders closing sport fishing for king salmon, including catch and-release. Repeating that same conservation closure through annual emergency action creates uncertainty for anglers, guides, businesses, and enforcement, even though the biological rationale is well established in years of low productivity. This proposal meets AO 360 because it clarifies the default rule during king-salmon closures, improves communication, reduces repeated administrative burden, and provides greater transparency about what anglers may and may not do when king retention is closed.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? This draft was developed from current ADF&G king-salmon emergency-order language and conservation practice in Cook Inlet. Advisory Committee review is recommended before filing to improve area coverage and code-section placement.

PROPOSED BY: Chelsa Johnson

(EF-F27-087)

PROPOSAL 12

5 AAC 57.120 General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area. and 5 AAC 58.022. Waters; seasons; bag, possession, annual and size limits; and special provisions for Cook Inlet – Resurrection Bay Saltwater Area and 5 AAC 59.120 General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Anchorage Bowl Drainages Area and 5 AAC 60.120 General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Knik Arm Drainages Area and 5 AAC 61.110. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Susitna River Drainage Area and 5 AAC 62.120 General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the West Cook Inlet Area.

Require recording of all harvested king salmon in the sport fishery, regardless of size, as follows:

(Boards Support Note: This proposal will be heard and public testimony will be taken at both the LCI and UCI meetings and deliberated at the UCI meeting)

In the Cook Inlet area King Salmon of all sizes that are retained must be immediately be recorded.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?

To address Upper Cook Inlet King Salmon enumeration concerns.

All sizes of King Salmon caught need to be accounted for to determine accurate populations.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Yes. In discussions with other people.

PROPOSED BY: Dyer VanDevere

(EF-F27-199)

PROPOSAL 13

5 AAC 56.XXX New section; 5 AAC 57.XXX New section; 5 AAC 58.XXX New section; 5 AAC 59.XXX; New section; 5 AAC 60.XXX New section; 5 AAC 61.XXX New section; and 5 AAC 62.XXX New section.

Establish the delegation of authority to restrict guided sport fishing during times of low king salmon abundance through emergency order, as follows:

(Boards Support Note: This proposal will be heard and public testimony will be taken at both the LCI and UCI meetings and deliberated at the UCI meeting)

Authorize restriction of guided sport fishing effort in Cook Inlet drainages during low Chinook salmon escapement

PROPOSED CHANGE:

Amend 5 AAC 56 by adding a new section to read:

5 AAC 56.0XX. Cook Inlet Chinook Salmon Conservation Measures for Guided Sport Fisheries.

(a)When preseason forecasts or inseason assessments indicate that Chinook salmon escapement is not expected to meet established minimum escapement goals in Cook Inlet or its tributary systems, the commissioner may, by emergency order under AS 16.05.060, restrict guided sport fishing effort in affected freshwater areas as necessary for conservation and to achieve escapement objectives.

(b)Restrictions may include, but are not limited to:

- limits on the number of guided sport fishing trips; daily, weekly, monthly, or annually to align with other commercial fishing marine operators and restrictions;
- reduced limits on the number of anglers per guided vessel;
- time and area closures specific to guided sport fishing;
- restrictions on methods and means of access directly associated with guided sport fishing activity, including motorized vessel use in specified areas of all watersheds

(c)Actions taken under this section shall be consistent with sustained yield principles and based on the best available scientific information and may be implemented in coordination with management actions under 5 AAC 21.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?

PROBLEM:

Chinook salmon stocks returning to Cook Inlet and its tributaries periodically experience preseason forecasts or inseason conditions indicating escapements are unlikely to achieve established minimum escapement goals (MEGs), as required under AS 16.05.255 and implemented through management plans including 5 AAC 21.360.

In such years, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) restricts commercial fisheries under 5 AAC 21 to reduce harvest. However, current regulations under 5 AAC 56 do not provide explicit authority or consistent guidance to proportionally reduce guided sport fishing effort within freshwater systems during these same conservation conditions. Guided sport fisheries may

continue at relatively high effort levels even when Chinook retention is prohibited, resulting in continued incidental catch, handling stress, and hooking mortality.

Additionally, cumulative in-river use within Cook Inlet watersheds has increased substantially, including intensive angling pressure and motorized vessel activity.

Concentrated boat traffic from guided sport fishing operations represents a consistent and underrecognized driver of habitat degradation in anadromous waters. High-frequency vessel use in shallow river systems can measurably increase bank erosion, mobilize fine sediments, and disturb spawning activity, directly affecting egg survival and productivity. During periods of low Chinook abundance, allowing this level of unmitigated in-river disturbance conflicts with escapement objectives.

The Board has authority under AS 16.05.251 and AS 16.05.255 to regulate fishing methods and effort to ensure sustained yield and achieve escapement goals.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE?

- Chinook salmon escapement goals will continue to be missed and may require the need for more critical federal classification as endangered species which would even lessen opportunity collectively amongst all in river user groups and fishermen.
- Conservation measures will remain disproportionately applied to commercial fisheries under 5 AAC 21 and localized industry and commerce will continue to be significantly reduced, even more so than what has occurred already.
- Fishing-related mortality in freshwater systems will remain unadjusted during conservation events
- Increasing in-river use and vessel activity will continue to impact spawning access
- Long-term sustained yield of Cook Inlet Chinook stocks will continue to be reduced

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

- Provides clear authority within 5 AAC 56 to reduce guided fishing effort during conservation events
- Aligns in-river guided fisheries with restrictions applied under 5 AAC 21
- Reduces fishing mortality and habitat disturbance during low Chinook abundance
- Improves likelihood of achieving escapement goals
- Promotes equitable conservation responsibility among user groups
- Supports long-term sustainability of Chinook salmon stocks

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT?

- Chinook salmon stocks in Cook Inlet drainages
- All users dependent on long-term fisheries sustainability
- Fisheries managers through clearer regulatory authority

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER?

- Guided sport fishing operators during restricted periods
- Associated businesses dependent on guided fishing activity

SUMMARY:

Existing regulations under 5 AAC 56 do not explicitly provide for reduction of guided sport fishing effort during conservation events. Continued reliance on restrictions applied under 5 AAC 21 does not address total fishing mortality or cumulative in-river disturbance affecting escapement success. Less commercialized activities and user traffic of all types within all watersheds of Cook Inlet during critical phases of low chinook abundance will equate to better survivability of anadromous species within their critical freshwater habitats. This would be a valuable tool ADFG could use to help better manage in-river commercialized sport fishing traffic during low chinook abundance while maintaining all fisheries for the betterment of the region collectively into the future.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee?

PROPOSED BY: Erik Anderson

(EF-F27-235)

PROPOSAL 14

5 AAC 56.XXX. New section.

Create a management plan for the Anchor River, Stariski Creek, Deep Creek, and Ninilchik River coho salmon sport fisheries as follows:

(a)The purpose of this plan is to direct the department in the management of the sport fisheries for the coho salmon stocks in the Anchor River, Stariski Creek, Deep Creek, and Ninilchik River. At times of low abundance, ADFG would implement restrictions to harvest and gear types to ensure escapement goals are met.

(b)The department shall manage the sport fisheries in these streams in unison and based on coho salmon escapement in the Anchor River.

(1) The area, seasons, bag and possession limits, and methods and means are described in 5 AAC 56.122 & 5 AAC 56.120;

(2) If the anticipated Anchor River coho salmon escapement goal is less than 4,000 the commissioner will, by emergency order, restrict the coho salmon bag and possession limits to one coho salmon 16" or greater in length and gear will be single-hook artificial lure.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? (I/We) would like to address the management of our Coho runs on the streams of the Lower Kenai Peninsula. At times of low run strength this would give ADFG tools to manage runs to ensure escapement goals based on the 10 year average. With the current data collected at the Anchor River weir ADFG has the ability to project run strength real time. Historical data shows that all the rivers in the area typically follow similar run timing and relative run strengths. Coho salmon returns over the last 10 year period have been showing progressively smaller returns on these streams. At times of low abundance, a more conservative bag and possession limits with gear restrictions would still provide angler opportunity while helping to ensure escapement goals are met.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee?

PROPOSED BY: Homer AC

(EF-F27-044)

PROPOSAL 15

5 AAC 21.XXX. New section.

Establish paired management actions and harvest “benchmarks” for coho salmon between Upper Cook Inlet sport and commercial fisheries, as follows.

(Boards Support Note: This proposal will be heard and public testimony will be taken at both the LCI and UCI meetings and deliberated at the UCI meeting)

If you still want to develop it in proposal form, draft a new Upper Cook Inlet section providing that the department shall manage combined freshwater and saltwater sport retention of coho salmon so it does not exceed a defined commercial coho benchmark, using bag limits, annual limits, guided-trip limits, retention closures, and emergency orders as needed. Draft working language:

In Upper Cook Inlet, the commissioner shall manage freshwater and saltwater sport fisheries so that the combined retained sport harvest of coho salmon does not exceed the verified Cook Inlet commercial coho benchmark established under this section. If inseason reporting indicates that combined Upper Cook Inlet sport retention is projected to exceed that benchmark, the commissioner shall reduce sport-fishing opportunity by emergency order.

Because this proposal is likely allocative, consider holding it for the regular allocative call unless you specifically want to test the AO 360 screening boundary.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Current regulations do not provide a transparent standard for how coho conservation burdens will be shared across user groups when commercial opportunity is reduced. This draft is intended to create a clear backstop so that retained sport coho harvest does not outpace the selected commercial benchmark when conservation restrictions are being imposed on commercial users.

Important AO 360 note: this concept is likely allocative because it sets a cross-user harvest parity rule. It is included here in form layout because the transparency rationale is real, but it may still be rejected under AO 360 and may be better suited to the regular Cook Inlet call for allocative proposals.

If nothing is changed, the regulations will continue to leave burden-sharing implicit and contested rather than transparent.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee?

PROPOSED BY: Chelsa Johnson

(EF-F27-081)

PROPOSAL 16

5 AAC 56.122. Special provisions for seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area.

Prohibit the use of helicopters to transport anglers in select streams within the Kenai Peninsula Area as follows:

The use of helicopters to transport anglers or sport caught fish is prohibited in the flowing waters of Deep Creek, Anchor River, Stariski Creek, and Ninilchik River.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?

Rivers on the lower Kenai Peninsula host some of the last best steelhead fishing accessible by road in North America. The accessibility and productivity of these systems have led to a very intense fishery in which many fish are caught and released multiple times. Historically low intensity fishing areas on these streams (Deep Creek, Anchor River, etc.) now being exploited by guided helicopter fishermen. The historically high intensity fishing areas (near road crossings and public access points near the mouths of rivers) are still being pressured and crowding situations are occurring. This has led to many user conflicts on the rivers, and in attempt to avoid such situations anglers will hike for hours to gain access to areas where other walk-in anglers have not fished - only to have a helicopter land at their intended destination. Furthermore, on any given day low flying helicopter traffic consistently bombards anglers in very popular easy-to-access locations with the constant noise, ruining the experience for nearly every angler on the river.

People who rent helicopters can easily afford to fish more remote, less accessible parts of the state with fixed wing aircraft or boat access or with helicopters accessing places that are not readily accessible by motor vehicle and foot. A single helicopter operation can ruin the fishing experience for dozens of anglers. Nobody wants a helicopter flying over their head at low altitude all day. Virtually every person I know who fishes for steelhead on the lower Kenai Peninsula has drastically changed their behavior and fishing traditions to avoid helicopter traffic. Many have been virtually landed on, having to avoid prop-wash and debris generated by helicopter landings. Consistent low flying helicopter traffic has been shown to have negative effects on wildlife, and the lower Kenai Peninsula is no exception, with anecdotal reports of erratic moose behavior running from low flying aircraft. Homeowners in the area complain about constant noise from low flying air traffic.

In Alaska, helicopters are not allowed to be used when hunting squirrels. Should we not treat steelhead, one of the most iconic fish in the world, and one of the most coveted fish species in Alaska with the same protection as squirrels?

If nothing is done, wealthy, privileged, non-Alaska residents, who can easily afford to fish elsewhere (and not add pressure to systems already experiencing high numbers of walk-in anglers) will be allocated an unfair advantage to access the last best road accessible steelhead fisheries in North America. Local people will continue to be pushed off the rivers, and those who work hard to catch fish will be thwarted by those with money.

Lastly, the steelhead of the lower Kenai Peninsula are fall-run fish, meaning that they enter freshwater in the fall, overwinter, then spawn in the spring before dying or returning to the

saltwater. Once they enter freshwater, they rely on the energy reserves they have stored throughout the spring and summer to last them through the winter and into spring. While many steelhead are caught lower in the rivers and may remain in the lower sections throughout the winter many also push past the lower sections and “escape” the fishing pressure, overwintering peacefully in slow, deep holes further upriver in areas very seldom accessed by walk-in anglers. Use of helicopters to hop from hole-to-hole day in and day out and repeatedly pressuring fish in areas that have historically not received pressure. Clients of these guided helicopter trips are catching and releasing many steelhead that would otherwise not have encountered intense angling pressure besides the areas close to lower angler access points as they migrated passed. It is known that catch and release fishing is not mortality free. Some fish released in seemingly good condition will eventually die because of stress or injury incurred during the angling process. Continuation of high angling pressure via guided helicopter fishing will detrimentally impact the reproductive fitness and population of steelhead of the lower Kenai Peninsula.

Alternative solutions considered:

- A statewide ban on helicopter accessed fishing was deemed too broad and unnecessary.
- Regulations on times and places where helicopters could fly would be confusing, hard to enforce and not solve the problem, and might not be a solution available to the Board of Fisheries
- Regulations limiting guiding on the lower peninsula, while possibly a good idea, would not solve the problem of helicopters buzzing anglers.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Yes

PROPOSED BY: James Stubbs

(EF-F27-170)

PROPOSAL 17

5 AAC 56.122. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area.

Modify gear and dates in the Seward lagoon youth-only fishery, as follows:

WE WOULD LIKE TO CHANGE THE WORDING AS FOLLOWS:

(C) Seward Lagoon and the waters draining out of Seward Lagoon are closed to sport fishing, except that a person under 16 years of age may sport fish during a designated youth sport fishery, as follows:

(i) unless modified by emergency order, the designated youth sport fishery occurs for king salmon from June 17 – **July 31. No fishing will be allowed on July 3.4 & 5.** [JUNE 30]

(ii) unless modified by emergency order, the designated youth sport fishery occurs for coho salmon from August 25 – September **30** [7];

(iii) **only one single hook with an artificial lure, fly or bait may be used** [A SINGLE HOOK, OR A SINGLE-HOOK, ARTIFICIAL LURE, WITH BAIT MAY BE USED];

(iv) bag and possession limit of 2 fish.

(v) as specified in 5ACC 75.002(c), a person may not snag a fish

(vi) after a bag limit, a person may not sport fish in the Seward Lagoon or waters draining out of the Seward Lagoon that day.

The Seward AC interprets the term ‘single-hook’ to mean a treble hook. We do not believe treble hooks should be allowed in a youth fishery.

The Seward Fish & Game Advisory Committee Submitted Proposal #20 at the 2007 LCI meeting establishing this youth fishery. The Board adopted this Proposal.

ADF&G stocks an average of 340,000 king smolt and 240,000 coho smolt in the Seward Lagoon. This is a “Put & Take” fishery in a Terminal Harvest Area.

Since 2022, the Dept has extended the fishing time of this fishery by EO each year thru 2025 for kings. For coho, 2022, 23, & 25 were extended by EO. Due to low returns, 2024 was not extended.

The Seward AC believes in the Dept’s EO authority. We also feel that if this proposal were adopted, the Dept would be able to use an EO to close each fishery if warranted but will not have to continue to extend it each year. If adopted, this proposal would codify increased access by youth to a fishery that is meant as a terminal fishery and reduce the confusion a youth angler (or their parent) may have determining if there has been an extension to the fishery.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?

The current regulations as published in 5AAC 56.122 (9) (C) read as follows:

(9) Resurrection Bay drainages:

(C) Seward Lagoon and the waters draining out of Seward Lagoon are closed to sport fishing, except that a person under 16 years of age may sport fish during a designated youth sport fishery, as follows:

- (i) unless modified by emergency order, the designated youth sport fishery occurs for king salmon from June 17 - June 30;
- (ii) unless modified by emergency order, the designated youth sport fishery occurs for coho salmon from August 25 - September 7;
- (iii) a single hook, or a single-hook, artificial lure, with bait may be used;
- (iv) bag and possession limit of two fish;
- (v) as specified in 5 AAC 75.022(c), a person may not snag a fish;
- (vi) after taking a bag limit, a person may not sport fish in the Seward Lagoon or waters draining out of Seward Lagoon that day;

PROPOSED BY: Seward Fish & Game Advisory Committee (EF-F27-055)

PROPOSAL 18

5 AAC 58.030. Methods, means, and general provisions-Finfish.

Modify the definition of bag limit for Southcentral saltwater sport fisheries, as follows:

(Boards Support Note: This proposal will be heard and public testimony will be taken at both the LCI and UCI meetings and deliberated at the UCI meeting)

Modify the definition of bag limit for **Southcentral saltwaters**, as follows: (4)“bag limit" means the maximum legal take of fish per person per day, in the area in which the person is fishing, even if part or all of the fish are immediately preserved; a fish when landed and not immediately released becomes a part of the bag limit of **the person taking part in the catch and holding the fishing rod at the time of landing**. [THE PERSON ORIGINALLY HOOKING IT];

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?

Current regulations are impossible to enforce equally across saltwater sport fishing user groups; disproportionately penalize saltwater charter businesses fishing the same saltwaters as private vessels; and make it illegal to assist anglers who may need special assistance in many scenarios.

Traditionally, charter fishing allocations have surpassed those of private fishing vessels. However, with a rise in unguided saltwater rental boats, this is no longer the case in some areas of the state. Thus, regulatory language needs to be updated to ensure objective and clear enforcement is possible from an off-vessel position -- such as by a law enforcement officer on the shore or another vessel -- so it can be applied equitably and effectively to all user groups.

At present law enforcement must be onboard to determine who hooked a fish in salt water. No public or private angler is boarded by an undercover officer to witness their fishing effort. On a charter vessel, where anyone can book a seat, this is commonplace. It is currently lawful to reel up another person's fish all the way from the bottom of the ocean as long as that person handled the rod first, which further complicates enforcement.

The current scheme also makes it hard for anglers who may need special assistance to legally participate in fishing. Kids, elderly, and others with specific needs or physical limitations may often need assistance getting a rod into their hands. Most fish are lost during the fight to the surface, not during the hooking process. Fish can often be hooked by a pole in a rod holder or downrigger without angler assistance.

Updating bag limit definitions under 5 AAC 75.995 as suggested would objectively make enforcement easier and fair to all user groups on salt water. Law enforcement officers could easily see from afar who was holding the rod at the time of landing a fish and more equitably apply catch standards.

As proposed, in Southcentral saltwater sport fisheries, a fish would be considered part of an angler's bag limit if that angler participated in the effort to catch the fish and maintained control of the rod at the time of the fish's landing. Assistance from others in hooking, netting, gaffing, or briefly handling the rod would not constitute harvest. Intentional transfer of a fish between anglers for the purpose of circumventing bag limits is and would continue to be prohibited.

Limiting this proposed change to Southcentral saltwaters will serve as a good pilot program to determine if it would or should be used in other regulatory areas. There was comment from the Board during the March 2026 Statewide Finfish meeting that this may cause issues in areas with differing resident and non-resident catch limits. Southcentral saltwaters do not have those types of bag limit separations. Further, this proposal would not affect fresh water anglers, and endorses the experience of catching a sport fish by participating in an angler's own catch.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Yes, this proposal was prepared with input from charter fishing organizations and saltwater anglers from around Alaska, including some members of the Homer Advisory Committee.

PROPOSED BY: Clay Duda, Homer Charter Association

(EF-F27-137)

PROPOSAL 19

5 AAC 56.120 General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area and 5 AAC 57.120 and General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area. and 5 AAC 59.120 General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Anchorage Bowl Drainages Area and 5 AAC 60.120 General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Knik Arm Drainages Area and 5 AAC 61.110. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Susitna River Drainage Area and 5 AAC 62.120 General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the West Cook Inlet Area.

Prohibit sport fishing derbies in fresh waters of Cook Inlet, as follows:

(Boards Support Note: This proposal will be heard and public testimony will be taken at both the LCI and UCI meetings and deliberated at the UCI meeting)

- Create a clear, standing rule that organized freshwater salmon derbies, tournaments, or prize competitions are prohibited in Cook Inlet salmon drainages.
- Define organized competitive events to include prize, cash, bounty, leaderboard, or sponsor based competitions tied to the capture, landing, or release of salmon.
- Allow ordinary unguided and guided sport fishing to continue under existing regulations while removing the incentive structure that can intensify effort and handling.

Draft regulatory language:

5 AAC 57.XXX. Organized salmon derbies and tournaments prohibited in Cook Inlet freshwater drainages.

A person may not conduct, sponsor, advertise, or participate in an organized derby, tournament, jackpot, contest, or other competitive event in freshwater of the Cook Inlet Area in which a prize, purse, bounty, leaderboard position, or other reward is based on the catch, landing, measurement, or release of salmon.

For purposes of this section, “organized competitive event” includes an event promoted by an individual, business, guide service, club, nonprofit organization, media outlet, or sponsor that rewards salmon catch or release performance.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Current Cook Inlet freshwater sport-fishing regulations do not clearly state whether organized salmon derbies, tournaments, jackpots, or other prize-based competitive events may be conducted in salmon-bearing freshwaters during periods when salmon stocks are under conservation pressure. That lack of clarity creates avoidable enforcement ambiguity and invites concentrated effort, repeated handling, and promotional pressure on fish and river reaches that may already be stressed.

This proposal meets AO 360 because it clarifies an existing regulatory obligation, reduces enforcement ambiguity, improves public communication about what organized events are allowed, and reduces the need for case-by-case arguments about whether a promoted competitive event is consistent with conservation-focused sport-fish regulations.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? This draft was developed from publicly available ADF&G emergency-order practice, current conservation concerns for Cook Inlet king salmon, and peer-reviewed literature on catch-and-release stress. It has not yet been finalized with an Advisory Committee, but the proposer intends to seek review from area fishermen and advisory bodies before filing.

PROPOSED BY: Chelsa Johnson

(EF-F27-086)

PROPOSAL 20

5 AAC 56.120 General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area and 5 AAC 58.022. Waters; seasons; bag, possession, annual and size limits; and special provisions for Cook Inlet – Resurrection Bay Saltwater Area and 5 AAC 62.120 General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the West Cook Inlet Area.

Prohibit charter vessels from participating in sport fishing derbies, as follows:

(Boards Support Note: If adopted, this will only affect the Lower Cook Inlet management area)

All registered Charter Vessels can not participate in a sport fishing derby.

Also add a Charter option in the above section

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Charter vessels in sport fishing derbies.

The fleet that markets this idea for catching the biggest should not be involved in A public sport competition.

Also add a Charter option in the above section

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Yes and no, I've talked to all sectors across the state along with ADFG and Read current regulations on the benefits of Charter Operators.

PROPOSED BY: Jordan Stover

(EF-F27-132)

PROPOSAL 21

5 AAC 75.076. Sport fishing guide and operating reporting requirements.

Require observers or electronic monitoring on charter vessels in Cook Inlet, as follows:

(Boards Support Note: If adopted, this will only affect the Lower Cook Inlet management area)

All Charter registered vessels must also register in a Observer program or have Electronic Monitoring.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Observer Program or Electronic Monitoring for the Charter Fleet.

The only commercialized fleet without any monitoring. Data is collected by self reporting of Log books.

*also why is there no option for Charter on the above options for which sector?

Subsistence- personal use- sport- commercial?

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Yes and no. I've talked to sport/ Charter/ commercial and the AFDG Along with looking at regulations about differences and Benefits of being a Charter operator.

PROPOSED BY: Jordan Stover

(EF-F27-136)

PROPOSAL 22

5 AAC 75.0756. Sport fishing guide and operating reporting requirements.

Require logbooks for fishing guides in freshwaters of Upper Cook Inlet, as follows:

(Boards Support Note: If adopted, this will only affect the Lower Cook Inlet management area)

Enact all Charter guide operators must submit Log Books to ADFG for all fish in Fresh Water.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? No log books required for fresh water Charter guides.

Zero accountability for king salmon going to spawn from a commercialized Charter operator

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Yes and no, I've talked to all sectors and ADFG about benefits of being a Charter operator

PROPOSED BY: Jordan Stover

(EF-F27-130)

PROPOSAL 23

5 AAC 75.0756. Sport fishing guide and operating reporting requirements.

Require freshwater sport fishing guide logbooks within Cook Inlet rivers, as follows:

(Boards Support Note: This proposal will be heard and public testimony will be taken at both the LCI and UCI meetings and deliberated at the UCI meeting)

Require fresh water sport fishing guides in upper Cook Inlet rivers to complete a log book for each guided trip. To include but not limited to: date/time, location, number of clients, species caught/released, and hours fished.

Currently the fresh water guided sector is the only commercial entree that isn't required to fill out a log book with harvest data. Upper Cook inlet has the highest inriver participation across the state. Management currently lacks necessary information, and hinges on highly insufficient weir data as well as voluntary surveys holding inadequate participation levels.

AS 16.05-251 grants the department authority to regulate fisheries as needed for their conservation, development, and utilization. Freshwater guide reporting would allow the board to address a lack of: timely, accurate data regarding in-river harvest, guided fishing pressure, run timings, and fish stock health. This missing data is considered necessary for proper conservation, management and allocation of the fisheries resources.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Reinstatement of fresh water logbooks for the guided sector in upper cook inlet rivers from 59deg46.15 North. A standardized Elog book requirement would help restore critical harvest data, improve transparency for in-river harvest levels, and help support sustainable fresh water fisheries.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Yes, Homer AC Full support of it.

PROPOSED BY: Homer AC

(EF-F27-077)

PROPOSAL 24

5 AAC 01.595. Subsistence bag, possession, and size limits and 5 AAC 56.120 General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, annual, an size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area and 5 AAC 58.022. Waters; seasons; bag, possession, annual and size limits; and special provisions for Cook Inlet – Resurrection Bay Saltwater Area and 5 AAC 62.120 General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the West Cook Inlet Area and 5 AAC 77.525 Personal use salmon fishery.

Establish a maximum size limit for king salmon and halibut in subsistence, sport, personal use, and commercial fisheries in lower Cook Inlet, as follows:

(Boards Support Note: If adopted, this will only affect the Lower Cook Inlet management area)

Enact a Max size allowance for all Halibut and King Salmon taken in state waters
For all sectors. - subsistence- personal use- sport- commercial and CHARTER FLEET.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Big mature king salmon and halibut being targeted.

They are the most important part of each stock. -more eggs and bigger eggs.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Yes and no, I have talked to all sectors also personal studying and ADFG about negative affects of Targeting Mature large fish only in the Halibut and King Salmon stocks.

PROPOSED BY: Jordan Stover

(EF-F27-131)

PROPOSAL 25

5 AAC 21.350. Closed Waters.

Close waters to commercial fishing within ½ miles of the Homer spit, as follows:

I am proposing a ½ mile sanctuary around the Homer spit, free of any commercial fishing.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? My name is Joseph Brewer. I have lived in Homer since 2012. I have worked on the spit at a tackle shop for eight of those years.. During that time there has been an ongoing debate over commercial fishing around and near the Homer spit. In the last couple of years it has come to a head. Commercial boats beached right behind lands end nets strung out in every direction from multiple boats.

This past summer I sent a tourist gentleman down to take his children fishing on the beach behind lands end. He returned a few moments later visibly upset saying "well that was useless". An individual on the commercial fishing boat, according to the gentleman, cursed him out and told him to leave.

These people spend thousands to come to Alaska to experience that true Alaskan experience. They do not need to be told to leave.

Secondly many charters complained about having to navigate in and around the commercial nets in order to enter and leave the Homer harbor..

I was also made aware of at least one incident where a private citizen who knew nothing of commercial fishing methods got their boat caught up in a net.

But perhaps most importantly a member of the Coast guard told me that at times it would be impossible to respond if they needed to.

This seems the best answer for all involved. Safety for the coast guard should they need to respond. Safety and security for charters and private boaters navigating in and out of Homer harbor. And safety and security for private citizens wanting to take their children fishing.

I am not against commercial fishing. I am well aware that it plays a vital role in the Alaskan economy. That is why I am only proposing a ½ mile sanctuary around the spit so that everyone can do what they want to do in safety and security.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee?

PROPOSED BY: Joseph Brewer

(EF-F27-009)

PROPOSAL 26

5 AAC 21.350 Closed Waters

Close waters to commercial fishing within 1 mile of the Homer Spit, as follows:

Closed Waters to all Commercial Fishing within 1 mile of the Homer Spit to insure Public Boaters Safety exiting or entering the Homer Small Boat Harbor.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Closure of all Commercial Fishing within 1 mile of the Homer Spit.

Why? Because there is an issue with Commercial Fishing nets extending from the Homer Spit out to $\frac{1}{2}$ or $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile interfering with boat traffic coming and going to or from the Homer Small Boat Harbor.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? No coordination. I have seen the issue first hand and the reaction by Commercial Fishers towards Private Boaters. It's already a high traffic area made worse by Commercial Fishing with long nets blocking off traditional travel lanes to enter or exit the Homer Small Boat Harbor

PROPOSED BY: Kenneth Bingaman

(EF-F27-051)

PROPOSAL 27

5 AAC 21.200. Fishing districts, subdistricts, and sections.

Modify multiple subdistricts of the Southern District to create a 1-mile corridor around the Homer spit, as follows:

Alaska Administrative Code Number: 5 AAC 21.200 (d) (6) Fishing Districts, subdistricts, and sections

Reconfigure 5 AAC 21.200 Fishing Districts, subdistricts, and sections in (d) of the Southern Districts subdistricts of (5)(6)(7)(8) by pivoting the Northshore Subdistrict (8) one mile off the Homer Spit and adjusting other subdistricts to accommodate this one mile corridor.

To alleviate targeting wild sockeye, king, coho, and chum salmon destined for the upper inlet in this recognized corridor off the tip of the Homer Spit (Coal Point) and allow the department to direct the LCI purse seine fleet efforts to increase harvest on available designated Lower Cook Inlet hatchery sockeye, or to fish in other districts as intended as the condition to receive power purse seine privilege, reinforce unhindered passage of UCI wild run sockeye by reconfiguring the Northshore subdistrict boundary line by:

pivoting the line of the Northshore subdistrict one mile away from the present point used north and south of a line from the tip of Coal Point 59 degrees 36.00'N. Lat 151 degrees 19.70'W. long. Configure the Northshore Subdistrict lat./ long line to pivot from the point north of Chugachik island at 59 degrees 45.00' N lat., 151 degrees 02.80' W. long., to intersect at that point of the Tutka Bay Subdistrict line (d) (4) where this line meets the northern point of Yukon Island. Adjust all other subdistricts accordingly to create this corridor buffer of migrating wild salmon. Traditional Hand Purse seine gear could be allowed in the Northshore subdistrict.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Contrary to BOF concern regulated under 5 AAC 21.269 Lower Cook Inlet Seine Fishery Management Plan, the department has been directing efforts of the LCI "power" purse seine fleet away from its LCI hatchery stocked sockeye salmon, into the recognized corridor of wild run sockeye, king, coho, and chum salmon destined for Upper Cook Inlet River systems.

This also creates an intense safety and navigational hazard issue off the busy summer tourist, boat traffic of fish deliveries of commercial, sport, personal use, charter, pilot boat, kayak, and sailboats of the Homer Spit.

The power purse seine fleet has sockeye delivered from Trail Lakes hatchery near Moose Pass, 150 miles North of Kachemak Bay for its harvest. Three remote release sites are stocked by boat, truck and plane into the designated Hazel Lake, China Poot and Tutka Special Harvest Areas (SHAs) in the LCI Southern District paid for by loans that hold all Area H permits as surety.

To direct the LCI common property seine permits away from SHAs so the chronically insolvent PNP CIAA can excess the majority of cost recovery sockeye in the southern district is not an excuse to target wild salmon destined for Upper Inlet systems.

The only wild sockeye system in the LCI Southern district of Kachemak Bay is above the native village of Nanwalek in English Bay Lakes, is fully allocated with an escapement range of 6,000-13,500 used for subsistence and local limited beach set net fishing.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee?

PROPOSED BY: Wesley Humbyrd

(EF-F27-102)

PROPOSAL 28

5 AAC 21.350. Closed waters.

Reduce size of the closed waters area at the terminus of McCarty Fjord at Delusion Lake, as follows:

5 AAC 21.350 is amended to read:

5 AAC 21.350. Closed waters.

(a) Salmon may not be taken in any of the waters listed in this section.

(f) Outer District

(11) waters of McCarty Fjord [north] east of a line from [57° 37.52' N. lat., 150° 19.18' W. long. to 59° 37.03' N. lat., 150° 17.01' W. long.]; **a point at 59° 38.36'N. latitude, 150° 16.70'W. longitude to another point at 59° 37.13'N. latitude, 150° 16.70'W. longitude.**

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Current regulatory closed waters excessively prohibit commercial fishing in the entire northern terminus of McCarty Fjord. Moving the line so that it is approximately 500 yards from the exposed tideland banks of Delusion Creek at low water would make this boundary more consistent with many other regulatory closed water areas in Lower Cook Inlet.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

(EF-F27-252)

PROPOSAL 29

5 AAC 21.335 Minimum distance between units of gear

Create a minimum distance between commercial purse seines in Cook Inlet, as follows:

- (a) No part of a commercial **purse seine**, drift gillnet, or set gillnet, may be set or operated within 600 feet of any part of another commercial set gillnet.
- (b) Repealed 7/21/91
- (c) In Chinitna Bay Subdistrict, no part of a purse seine may be placed or operated within 600 feet of a drift or set gill net.
- (d) [REPEAL]

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Equitable distances applied to all gear types and administrative areas of Area H operations.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee?

PROPOSED BY: Wesley Humbyrd

(EF-F27-106)

PROPOSAL 30

5 AAC 21.330 Gear, 5 AAC 21.332 Seine specifications and operation, and 5 AAC 21.382 Kenai River late-run king salmon stock of concern management plan.

Repeal commercial beach seine as a legal gear type in the Cook Inlet Management Area, as follows:

Prohibit the use of beach seine gear in all waters of Cook Inlet indefinitely.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?

Issue

The Board is considering or has recently authorized beach seine gear, a fundamentally different harvest method than existing Cook Inlet gear types, at a time when chinook (king) salmon returns collectively, statewide, remain a critical stock of concern.

Beach seines are an active, mobile gear type that herd and concentrate fish in nearshore waters for capture and sorting. This differs substantially from traditional passive fisheries and introduces new and unquantified conservation risks, particularly for king salmon in mixed-stock conditions.

Problem if Not Adopted

Allowing beach seine gear without established performance data will:

- Increase unquantified post-release mortality of chinook salmon due to crowding, handling, and prolonged exposure in warm, shallow, and turbid waters
- Reduce the effectiveness of conservation measures by introducing a gear type with uncertain selectivity and escapement outcomes
- Increase management uncertainty and conflict during a period when king salmon conservation already requires restrictive action across all fisheries

Benefits of This Proposal

- Applies a precautionary conservation standard for a stock of concern
- Avoids introducing a gear type with unknown biological impacts
- Maintains reliance on existing fisheries with known performance and monitoring history
- Supports consistent, transparent management based on proven conservation tools rather than experimental methods

Affected Parties

Benefits:

- Chinook salmon stocks
- All long-term fishery participants (sport, personal use, commercial)

-Fishery managers seeking predictable outcomes

The commercial fisherman and permit owners this is intended for already own the gear that was previously approved in times of mandatory conservation efforts. Forcing them to completely “retool” for the industry is not financially feasible for most and is cost prohibitive as an untested method unproven fishing method that logic says is not better, in fact highly likely to be much worse than most could anticipate. It took decades to properly tool the commercial fisherman of which has been proven to be effective while adhering to strict conservation reform measures within the state’s jurisdictional authority.

Potential Negative Effects:

-Those seeking to develop or operate beach seine fisheries

This proposal prioritizes resource conservation over expansion of new gear types during a conservation-driven management cycle.

Justification

Cook Inlet fisheries have historically relied on passive gear types, such as set gillnets, which fish in a fixed location, allow fish movement with tides, and have well-documented performance characteristics.

In contrast, beach seine gear actively encircles and compresses fish in shallow water, requires handling and sorting of mixed-species catches before release, and operates in silty, low-visibility conditions where species identification and safe release are more difficult.

The proposed gear lengths (up to 70 fathoms) further increase the scale and intensity of fish capture handling.

Chinook salmon are generally known to utilize deeper migratory pathways, meaning existing nearshore passive gear already has limited interception relative to offshore movement patterns. Introducing an active nearshore gear type designed to herd fish increases the likelihood of intercepting and stressing non-target king salmon that would otherwise pass.

Critically, post-release mortality for chinook in beach seine fisheries is not well quantified for Cook Inlet conditions. In the absence of clear evidence demonstrating low mortality rates, authorizing or expanding this gear type represents an unnecessary conservation risk.

Given that Cook Inlet chinook salmon are currently managed under stock-of-concern conditions requiring restrictive actions across multiple fisheries, introducing or expanding a new gear type with uncertain mortality is inconsistent with a precautionary, sustained-yield management approach.

A precautionary prohibition is warranted until and unless clear, region-specific data demonstrate that beach seine operations can occur without increasing mortality of chinook salmon.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee?

PROPOSED BY: Erik Anderson

(EF-F27-233)

PROPOSAL 31

5 AAC 21.369 Lower Cook Inlet Seine Fishery Management Plan

Amend the preamble of the Lower Cook Inlet Seine Fishery Management Plan, as follows:

5 AAC 21.369. Lower Cook Inlet Seine Fishery Management Plan When the Board of Fisheries authorized the use of power purse seines in the Cook Inlet salmon fishery, the board was concerned that the more efficient gear might allow the fleet to increase its harvest of Upper Cook Inlet salmon stocks. The department shall manage the seine fleet **in all LCI districts** so that its efforts are directed on Lower Cook Inlet salmon stocks **and in the Southern District by restricting all access to the North shore subdistrict, unless gear reverts to the traditional hand purse seine gear.** The board recognizes that some incidental catch of Upper Cook Inlet salmon stocks will occur while the seine fishery is managed for Lower Cook Inlet salmon stocks.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Lower Cook Inlet seine fleet effort intentionally managed to increase harvest on salmon stocks destined for Upper Cook Inlet. Directed management away from LCI stocks is contrary to the conditions specified in 5 AAC 21.369 for the privilege to use power purse seine gear especially while UCI set net permit holders are unable to fish.

Cost recovery needs must not be used as an excuse to intercept UCI salmon stocks.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee?

PROPOSED BY: Wesley Humbyrd

(EF-F27-104)

PROPOSAL 32

5 AAC 21.XXX. New Section.

Establish enhanced salmon value allocation criteria for Cook Inlet commercial fisheries, as follows:

(Boards Support Note: This proposal will be heard and public testimony will be taken at both the LCI and UCI meetings and deliberated at the UCI meeting)

5AAC 21.XXX Cook Inlet Management Salmon Enhancement Allocation Plan

- (a) The purpose of the management and allocation plan contained in this section is to provide a fair and reasonable allocation of the harvest value of quantifiable enhanced salmon for the drift gillnet, seine, and set gillnet commercial fisheries. It is the intent of the board of fisheries (board) to allocate enhanced salmon stock value in Cook Inlet Area H
- (b) For the purposes of determination of allocation percentages for the drift gillnet, purse seine, and set gillnet commercial fisheries, calculations shall be based on the exvessel value of the harvest of enhanced salmon stocks by purse seine fisheries without considering the drift or set gillnet catch. The exvessel value allocation of enhanced salmon stocks for the set gillnet gear group is 20 percent of the total allocation. The exvessel value allocation of enhanced salmon stocks for the drift gillnet gear group is 30 percent of the total allocation. The remaining exvessel value allocation of the enhanced stocks for the purse seine is 50%.
- (c) As a general proposition, private nonprofit hatchery stocks supported by fishermen assessments will be managed to
 - (1) Maximize harvest in the common property fisheries consistent with wild stock conservation concerns based on inseason otolith monitoring on all annual in season harvest including cost recovery monitoring.
- (d) each year the department shall determine the exvessel value of the harvested enhancement assessment tax paid by the drift and set gill net permit holders from the Upper Inlet districts. This exvessel assessment value will be calculated from the information given on the commercial operator annual report for all participating processors and allocation percentages will compensate the next years assessment.
- (e) The department will not need to make inseason adjustments or changes in management to achieve the allocation percentages established in (b) of this section.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Fair, and reasonable allocation determined by quantifiable enhanced salmon value harvested for the drift gillnet, seine, and set gillnet commercial fisheries of Area H

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee?

PROPOSED BY: Wesley Humbyrd

(EF-F27-105)

PROPOSAL 33

5 AAC 21.XXX New Section

Request for creation of a Cook Inlet management and salmon enhancement allocation plan, as follows:

(Boards Support Note: This proposal will be heard and public testimony will be taken at both the LCI and UCI meetings and deliberated at the UCI meeting)

Create 5 AAC 21.XXX Cook Inlet Management and Salmon Enhancement Allocation Plan

Similar to the request the Board of Fisheries made to the Joint Northern and Southern Regional Planning Team (RPT) in 1994 to create their enhancement allocation plan;
Please request the Cook Inlet Regional Planning Team to assume responsibility for analyzing the allocation of enhanced fish shared between the Area H Limited Entry permit holders using over the last two decades and to annually evaluate the quantifiable harvest based on the exvessel value of the harvest of enhanced salmon stocks produced by CIAA enhancement projects to determine whether the distribution of the value of these fish taken in seine, fisheries in the region are fair and equitable allocation to all seine, drift, and set gillnet gear types paying assessments for consistent allocation percentage to be established by the Board of Fisheries in creating this

5 AAC 21.XXX Cook Inlet Management and Salmon Enhancement Allocation Plan

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? To provide a fair, and reasonable allocation plan based on quantifiable value of the harvest of enhanced salmon to share this value equitably among the drift gillnet, seine, and set gillnet commercial fisheries of Cook Inlets Area H.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee?

PROPOSED BY: Pioneer Alaskan Fisheries

(EF-F27-190)

PROPOSAL 34

5 AAC 21.372. Tutka Bay Lagoon Salmon Hatchery Management Plan.

Amend multiple aspects of the Tutka Bay Lagoon Hatchery Management Plan, as follows:

While it is recognized the BOF does not have the authority to adopt regulations or take action regarding “issuance or denial” of hatchery permits. It does have authority to amend terms relating to the harvest of fish by hatchery operators, and specific locations for harvest.

Repeal: Portions of 5 AAC 21.372 Tutka Bay Lagoon Salmon Hatchery Management Plan to remove all Special Harvest Areas SHAs “place holders” not utilized over the past decade to allow management by subdistrict.

Add: Tutka Hatchery permit #32 BMP language that addresses the share to the common property fisheries to operate efficiently so that at least 1/2 of the fish are harvestable by common property fisheries.

Add: a monitoring protocol that gives purpose to the otolith marking programs

5 AAC 21.372 Tutka Bay Lagoon Salmon Hatchery Management Plan

(a) The department, in consultation with the hatchery operator, shall manage the Tutka Bay subdistrict [AND THE PAINT RIVER SUBDISTRICT] **to operate efficiently so at least ½ of the pink salmon are available** to provide for common property fisheries and to achieve the hatchery broodstock and cost recovery goals set by the hatchery operator and approved by the department for the Tutka Bay lagoon hatchery. **An otolith monitoring protocol shall be initiated for sampling otoliths during statistical weeks when fish are present, in common property, broodstock, and cost recovery fisheries, to provide reports with otolith adjusted data to determine wild fish and hatchery stray components.** The department will manage the sport fisheries in accordance with regulations in 5 AAC 56 - 62 and 5 AAC 75. The commissioner may issue emergency orders to liberalize or restrict sport fisheries based on achievement of broodstock goals.

(b) the Tutka Bay lagoon hatchery special harvest areas are as follows:

(1) Tutka bay lagoon special harvest area: the marine waters of Tutka Bay subdistrict in the southern district southeast and shoreward of a line from 59° 30.23' n. Lat., 151° 28.23' w. Long. To 59° 28.63' n. Lat., 151° 30.37' w. Long., including Tutka Bay lagoon;

repeal [(2) PAINT RIVER SPECIAL HARVEST AREA: THE MARINE WATERS OF AKJEMGUIGA COVE WEST OF A LINE FROM 59° 09.50' N. LAT., 154° 12.83' W. LONG. TO 59° 10.00' N. LAT., 154° 12.50' W. LONG., INCLUDING THE LAGOON AT THE PAINT RIVER MOUTH AND INTERTIDAL FISH LADDER;]

repeal [(3) HALIBUT COVE LAGOON SPECIAL HARVEST AREA: THE MARINE WATERS OF HALIBUT COVE SUBDISTRICT EAST OF 151° 11.90' W. LONG., INCLUDING ALL MARINE WATERS OF HALIBUT COVE LAGOON.]

(c) Notwithstanding 5 AAC 21.320 and 5 AAC 21.330, and except as otherwise provided by emergency order issued under AS 16.05.060, the permit holder for the Tutka Bay Lagoon Hatchery, and the permit holder's agents, contractors, or employees authorized under 5 AAC 40.005(g) may harvest salmon in the Tutka Bay Lagoon Hatchery Special Harvest Area, [PAINT RIVER SPECIAL HARVEST AREA, AND HALIBUT COVE LAGOON SPECIAL HARVEST AREA] from 6:00 a.m. June 15 until 6:00 p.m. September 15 using purse seines, hand purse seines, and beach seines.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?

Kachemak Bays lagoons, glacial fed fjords, and estuaries, rank among the most productive ecosystems on earth supplying diverse fisheries. These geologic fisheries generators have been degraded to micro-focused pink salmon cost recovery harvest Areas (SHAs).

These SHAs have never been quantified as to best use of the site's potential, calculated if allocation benefits all Area H common property permits, and has never achieved optimum public benefit in the best interest of the public. Without these answers this Hatchery Management Plan should never have been put into regulation.

Kachemak Bay had productive natural pink salmon run functioning as significant "collectives", while massive shellfish harvests were occurring, supplying the southern district common property seine fleet, double the pink salmon harvest received from hatchery contribution.

The Tutka Bay Lagoon Salmon Hatchery Management Plan 5 AAC 21.372, superimposed itself over three State Legislatively Designated Area (LDA) boundaries of multiple agency jurisdictions causing conflict.

1. AS 41.21.131; Kachemak Bay Constitutional Special Purpose Site Park
2. AS 16.20.580; State Special Area Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Area
3. AS 16.20.590; State Special Area Kachemak Bay Critical Habitat Area

With accompanying AS 41.21.990; AS 16.20.500; AS 16.20.530. these laws provide specific directives to restrict incompatible uses that overwhelm or suppress the purpose and intent for perpetuation of diverse and abundant fish and wildlife and restrict the area to park-related functions.

The Board of Fisheries AS 16.20.510. gives specific conservation and protection responsibility: communicated from the legislature for Critical Habitat Area fish and wildlife.

where appropriate, shall adopt regulations they consider advisable for conservation and protection purposes...in state critical habitat areas.

Having Conservation Concern on so many fisheries to closure in this critical habitat area merits evaluation determining incompatible activities suppressing these stocks of concern and initiating rehabilitation plan Policy of AAC 95.610 directing:

"to give priority to encourage rehabilitation of depleted fish populations ".

Pink salmon are not a depleted species.

Fourteen shellfish species of concern declining systematically to closure as hatchery pink salmon releases systematically ramped up in known shellfish larval nurseries. Is this a coincidence or suspect, as a factor suppressing species recovery? This relationship necessitates evaluation.

Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association, (CIAA) has commandeered these LDAs, reducing the pink salmon fishery to a cost recovery commodity to essentially benefit itself alone (rare common property openings) and even that is at a tremendous financial loss of over \$8,000,000 in the past 14 years to add to its \$20,000,000 debt of other failing facilities. Where is the benefit?

CIAAs microscopically focused cost recovery pink salmon activities must be evaluated for highest and best use and in the best interest of the public

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee?

PROPOSED BY: Pioneer Alaskan Fisheries

(EF-F27-183)

PROPOSAL 35

5 AAC 5 AAC 21.377. Port Graham Salmon Hatchery Management Plan.

Repeal the Port Graham Hatchery Salmon Hatchery Management Plan, as follows:

Port Gaham Hatchery is closed

[5 AAC 21.377. PORT GRAHAM SALMON HATCHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Repeal 5 AAC 21.377 Port Graham Hatchery Management Plan to allow traditional fisheries managed by escapement goals in the Port Graham significant stocks of chum salmon, pink salmon, and coho salmon to grow back

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee?

PROPOSED BY: Pioneer Alaskan Fisheries inc.

(EF-F27-204)

PROPOSAL 36

5 AAC 21.373 Trail Lakes Hatchery Salmon Hatchery Management Plan

Repeal the Bear Lake Special harvest Area from the Trail Lakes Hatchery Salmon Hatchery Management Plan, as follows:

Repeal the Bear Lake Special Harvest Area designation by amending **Alaska Administrative Code** as follows:

5 AAC 21.373. Trail Lakes Hatchery Salmon Hatchery Management Plan.

(a) The department, in consultation with the hatchery operator, shall manage the [RESURRECTION BAY NORTH SUBDISTRICT,] China Poot Subdistrict, Tutka Bay Subdistrict, and the Kirschner Lake Section of the Bruin Bay Subdistrict to provide for a common property fishery and to achieve the hatchery broodstock and cost recovery goals set by the hatchery operator and approved by the department for the Trail Lakes Hatchery.

5 AAC 21.373 (b)(1).

Repealed. [BEAR LAKE SPECIAL HARVEST AREA: THE MARINE WATERS OF RESURRECTION BAY IN THE EASTERN DISTRICT NORTH OF THE LATITUDE OF CAINES HEAD AT 59° 58.93' N. LAT., AND THE FRESH WATERS OF BEAR CREEK, SALMON CREEK, AND RESURRECTION RIVER DOWNSTREAM FROM, AND INCLUDING, THE BEAR CREEK WEIR, EXCLUDING ALL FRESHWATERS DOWNSTREAM FROM THE SEWARD HIGHWAY AND NASH ROAD TO A LINE BETWEEN THE ADF&G SALTWATER/FRESHWATER REGULATORY MARKERS AT 60° 07.49' N. lat., 149° 24.72' W. LONG. AND 60° 07.25' N. LAT., 149° 22.54' W. LONG.;]

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?

Resurrection Bay has had **no** significant common property commercial fishing opening/opportunity for the past fifteen years.

By taking an average of 90% of the sockeye return in Resurrection Bay for the past fifteen years as cost recovery (the remainder is sport fishing), CIAA has created an exclusive terminal fishery in Resurrection Bay, to the detriment of Lower Cook Inlet commercial fishing permit holders. This exclusionary return is in violation of Alaska state statutes and state resource management policies.

Although CIAA has had this advantage for fifteen years, the result to CIAA is a net loss of five million dollars just for Resurrection Bay/Bear Lake. In light of CIAA's twenty-million-dollar debt—a debt that has increased annually over the past fifteen years and shows no potential for repayment—continuation of Resurrection Bay/Bear Lake Special Harvest area is unproductive, unnecessary, and unsustainable.

Removal of the Special Harvest Area designation would return priority to escapement, sport fishing, and common property commercial fishing as mandated in Alaska State Statutes and Administrative Code, and would remove an increasing debt burden on the financially struggling PNP.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? I spoke to the Seward Advisory Board on March 30, 2026 to express my concerns for the issues with Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association's financial situation and ever-

increasing debt, after attending several recent CIAA Board Meetings; my concerns about the Bear Lake weir; and the lack of commercial common property salmon fishing in Resurrection Bay for the past fifteen years.

PROPOSED BY: Marguerita Buchanan

(EF-F27-146)

PROPOSAL 37

5 AAC 21.373 Trail Lakes Hatchery Salmon Hatchery Management Plan and 5 AAC 21.376 Resurrection Bay Salmon Management Plan.

Amend hatchery salmon management plans in Resurrection Bay, as follows:

Amend the Trail Lakes Hatchery Salmon Hatchery Management Plan and Resurrection Bay Salmon Management Plan to prioritize escapement, sport fishing, and commercial common property fishing. Amend Alaska Administrative Code 5 AAC 21.373 & 5 AAC 21.376 as follows: **5 AAC 21.373** is amended to read:

5 AAC 21.373. Trail Lakes Hatchery Salmon Hatchery Management Plan. (a) The department, in consultation with the hatchery operator, shall manage the Resurrection Bay North Subdistrict, China Poot Subdistrict, Tutka Bay Subdistrict, and the Kirschner Lake Section of the Bruin Bay Subdistrict to provide for a common property fishery **of 75% of the actual (not projected) return,** and to achieve the hatchery broodstock and cost recovery goals **by harvesting no more than 25% of the actual (not projected) return.** [SET BY THE HATCHERY OPERATOR AND APPROVED BY THE DEPARTMENT FOR THE TRAIL LAKES HATCHERY.]

5 AAC 21.376 (a) and (b) are amended to read: **5 AAC 21.376. Resurrection Bay Salmon Management Plan.** (a) Since the beginning of significant commercial harvests of [PINK AND CHUM] salmon in Resurrection Bay, there have been some conflicts between recreational and commercial fishermen. The issues are the protection of coho, **sockeye,** and king salmon for the recreational fishery, and the management of surplus pink, **sockeye,** and chum salmon stocks in a manner that provides for a commercial fishery while minimizing the incidental catch of coho and king salmon.

(b) The commissioner shall, by emergency order,

(1) manage Resurrection Bay [COHO AND KING SALMON STOCKS] **coho, king, and sockeye stocks** primarily for recreational use;

(2) manage the indigenous pink and chum salmon stocks primarily for commercial use, insofar as that harvest does not interfere in time or area with the recreational fishery;

(3) manage the commercial fishery in Resurrection Bay in a manner that does not interfere with the recreational fishery.

(4) manage the sockeye fishery in Resurrection Bay in a manner that first prioritizes natural escapement goals for all species into Bear Lake and second, prioritizes commercial common property harvest.

(5) manage all cost recovery efforts in such a manner that first prioritizes escapement and is not greater than 25% of the actual commercial harvest.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Inequitable management and harvest of salmon returning to Resurrection Bay.

Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association (CIAA), a Lower Cook Inlet Private Non Profit (PNP), has been given priority as a cost recovery harvester, over common property, for the past fifteen years. This is in direct opposition to legislative intent and State of Alaska statutes: Article 8 § 15: *No*

exclusive right or special privilege of fishery shall be created or authorized in the natural waters of the State.

No PNP should have fifteen years of priority cost recovery that has virtually eliminated common property commercial fishing.

The legislative intent of PNPs is to **support, not usurp**, commercial common property fishing. For the past fifteen years, CIAA and ADF&G have managed Resurrection Bay as a terminal fishery that benefits **only** CIAA and 1-2 Lower Cook Inlet permit holders who are hired to perform cost recovery. 90% or more of the return has been taken as cost recovery for most of the past fifteen years.

Resurrection Bay salmon should be managed by ADF&G to benefit all users: sport and commercial fishermen.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? I spoke to the Seward Advisory Board on March 30, 2026 to express my concerns for the issues with Cook Inlet Aquaculture, Bear Lake, and Resurrection Bay.

PROPOSED BY: Marguerita M. Buchanan

(EF-F27-100)

PROPOSAL 38

5 AAC 21.376. Resurrection Bay Salmon Management Plan.

Amend multiple aspects of the Resurrection Bay Salmon Management Plan, as follows:

5 AAC 21.376. Resurrection Bay Salmon Management Plan. (a) Since the beginning of significant cost recovery and commercial harvests of sockeye, pink and chum salmon in Resurrection Bay, there have been some conflicts between commercial and recreational RECREATIONAL AND COMMERCIAL] fishermen. The issues are the protection of coho and king salmon for the recreational fishery, and the management of harvests of sockeye, [SURPLUS] pink and chum salmon stocks in a manner that provides for a commercial fishery while minimizing the incidental catch of coho and king salmon.

(b) The commissioner shall, by emergency order,

(1) manage Resurrection Bay coho and king salmon stocks primarily for recreational use;

(2) manage the sockeye, [INDIGENOUS] pink and chum salmon stocks primarily for commercial use, [INSOFAR AS THAT HARVEST DOES NOT INTERFERE IN TIME OR AREA WITH THE RECREATIONAL FISHERY];

(3) from May 15 thru July 15, manage the recreational [COMMERCIAL] fishery in Resurrection Bay in a manner that does not interfere with the commercial or cost recovery IRECREA TIONAL] fishery.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Currently, the cost recovery harvests and sport fishing activities occur at the same time and stocks along the east side of Resurrection Bay, conflicting from May 15 thru July 15.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Proposal discussed with members of the general public, processors, industry groups and commercial fishermen.

PROPOSED BY: Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association

(EF-F27-178)

PROPOSAL 39

5 AAC 77.531. Personal use herring fishery.

Modify methods and means for herring as follows:

(v) Herring spawn on kelp may only be taken by a handheld unpowered blade-cutting device. Kelp blades, or other aquatic plant species must be cut at least four inches above the stipe (stem).

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Harvesting herring spawn on kelp is a traditional and cultural practice for the Qutekcak Native Tribe. There is currently no ecological justification for keeping the harvest of herring spawn on kelp closed for the personal use fishery. The board has allowed this additional harvest opportunity for the Lower Cook Inlet subsistence area (Port Graham, Nanwalek and Seldovia) at the last board of fish meeting (Proposal 30; 2023). Reopening the harvest of herring spawn on kelp would allow cultural continuity and additional access to herring spawn harvest for personal use in the Lower Cook Inlet region.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Proposal developed in coordination with Chugach Regional Resources Commission. Discussed proposed regulatory language with Alaska Dept of Fish and Game staff

PROPOSED BY: Qutekcak Native Tribe

(EF-F27-153)

PROPOSAL 40

5 AAC 28.365 Cook Inlet Rockfish Management Plan and 5 AAC 58.022 Waters; seasons; bag, possession, annual, and size limits; and special provisions for Cook Inlet - Resurrection Bay Saltwater Area.

Establish pelagic rockfish harvest limits for Cook Inlet area commercial and sport fisheries, as follows:

A Total Allowable Harvest of 250,000 pounds of pelagic rockfish annually. Allocated with 70% to the Sport Fishery and 30% to the Commercial Fishery.

Proposed regulatory language in both fisheries as follows:

5 AAC 28.365. Cook Inlet Rockfish Management Plan

...

(d) The guideline harvest level for the Cook Inlet Area is 150,000 pounds (round weight) for all rockfish species combined.

(1) The Total Allowable Harvest of pelagic rockfish in all fisheries is limited to 250,000 pounds (round weight) of which the commercial fishery has a guideline harvest level of 30 percent of the TAH or 75,000 pounds.

...

AND

5 AAC 58.022. Waters; seasons; bag, possession, annual, and size limits; and special provisions for Cook Inlet - Resurrection Bay Saltwater Area.

(a) Except as provided in (b) and (c) of this section, and unless otherwise specified in this chapter, the following are the seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and special provisions for finfish and shellfish in the Cook Inlet - Resurrection Bay Saltwater Area:

...

(6) rockfish: may be taken from January 1 - December 31; bag limit of three fish and six in possession, of which only one per day and two in possession may be nonpelagic rockfish as defined in 5 AAC 75.995; no size limit;

(1) The Total Allowable Harvest of pelagic rockfish in all fisheries is limited to 250,000 pounds (round weight) of which the Sport fishery has a guideline harvest level of 70 percent of the TAH or 175,000 pounds.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?

Pelagic Rockfish harvests in the Cook Inlet and Gulf Coast areas have greatly increased in recent years. This was a significant discussion and concern of the department at the last Lower Cook Inlet Meeting and actions were taken to lower the bag and possession limits in the sport fishery. However, those actions, and subsequent emergency orders the last two summers, have proved insufficient and pelagic rockfish harvest remains a major concern. While significant work is being done to model and estimate the rockfish population in the area, at the very least a return to historical

harvest levels seems prudent and is the stated goal of the department. It seems appropriate at this point to set a Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) for pelagic rockfish in this area. I have chosen a TAH of 250,000 pounds based primarily on historical catch data that seems to indicate harvest at that level was sustainable long term. Similarly, the allocation within the TAH of 70% to the sport fishery and 30% to the commercial fishery fits historical harvest levels fairly well. This is unquestionably a reduction from current allocations for the commercial fishery, and from current harvests in the sport fishery; but under the circumstance that seems appropriate and necessary for both user groups.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? I discussed this at length with department staff and support in concept was indicated. The imperative to reduce harvest from current levels seems to be accepted. I had originally hoped that the department would submit their own proposal with a comprehensive rockfish management plan and associated TAH. As the proposal deadline approached, I was informed that this would not be occurring and so I am submitting this as the simplest solution to implement that I could see.

PROPOSED BY: Joseph Person

(EF-F27-206)

PROPOSAL 41

5 AAC 58.022. Waters; seasons; bag, possession, annual, and size limits; and special provisions for Cook Inlet- Resurrection Bay Saltwater Area.

Modify the waters open to harvesting rockfish, as follows:

If ADF&G needs to further restrict the sport fishery for rockfish in Cook Inlet, I recommend to close the retention of rockfish for charter anglers within Cook Inlet north of the latitude and west of the longitude of the Elizabeth Island day marker (59°08.8' 151°52 36.6').

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The sport rockfish harvest in Cook Inlet salt waters has been increasing and prompting ADF&G to issue EOs to keep the harvest from increasing. These restrictions have been through bag limit changes but if more restrictions are needed, then other restrictions would be more effective.

As a charter captain, I recognize the increase of rockfish harvest is by charter anglers and would prefer to maintain harvest for nonguided anglers closer to Homer harbor.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? No, although I am a Homer AC member and because of the allocative nature of this proposal, I wanted to submit this on my own.

PROPOSED BY: Cory DeCook

(EF-F27-179)

PROPOSAL 42

5 AAC 58.XXX. New Section.

Establish a pelagic rockfish guideline harvest level in the lower Cook Inlet as follows:

Set a Guide Harvest Level for lower cook inlet recreational pelagic rockfish (area p) at 50,000 fish.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?

Currently, the Department of Fish and Game does not have a target harvest limit for pelagic rockfish. In recent years ADF&G has decreased bag limits through emergency order based on an observed increase in fishing pressure and concerns about latent capacity within the charter fleet. This proposal uses a 5-year average of guided and unguided pelagic rockfish catch to set a target Guide Line Harvest level for LCI waters.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Yes this proposal was developed with members of the Homer Advisory Committee based on data from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

PROPOSED BY: Grant Peel

(EF-F27-193)

PROPOSAL 43

5 AAC 58.022. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for Cook Inlet – Resurrection Bay Saltwater Area.

Modify language describing bag and possession limits for nonpelagic rockfish to align with new definitions of demersal shelf and slope rockfish species assemblages, as follows:

5 AAC 58.022(a)(6) is amended to read:

(6) rockfish: may be taken from January 1 – December 31; bag limit of three fish and six in possession, of which only one per day and two in possession may be [NONPELAGIC] **demersal shelf or slope** rockfish [AS DEFINED IN 5 AAC 75.995]; no size limit;

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? This change would align regulations with the recent change in statewide rockfish definitions in 5 AAC 75.995(22). If adopted, the department may use emergency order authority to establish differential regulations for demersal shelf or slope rockfish if restrictions are needed for conservation purposes.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

(EF-F27-257)

PROPOSAL 44

5 AAC 28.365. Cook Inlet Rockfish Management Plan

Modify the season for the Cook Inlet Area directed pelagic rockfish jig fishery, as follows:

5 AAC 28.310. Fishing seasons for Cook Inlet Area

(d) Pelagic shelf rockfish may be taken only in a directed fishery from [JULY 1] **May 1** until closed by emergency order, and as specified in 5 AAC 28.365.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The directed rockfish fishery for Lower Cook Inlet currently opens on July 1, when the majority of potential participants are engaged in our area salmon and halibut fisheries. As a result, the fishery generally has a low level of participation that is not reflective of interest and market opportunity. Opening the fishery earlier would allow for increased participation to more fully utilize the allocation. For comparison, the Kodiak area rockfish jig fishery opens January 1; therefore, an earlier opening in Lower Cook Inlet would be consistent with how the fishery is managed in an adjoining management area. The harvest is managed under a GHF and log book reporting for harvest and an earlier opening date does not pose a conservation issue or additional burden of management.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Consulted with area staff from the Department of Fish and Game and area fisherman that participate in the directed rockfish fishery and would be affected by this regulation change

PROPOSED BY: Josh Wisniewski

(EF-F27-125)

PROPOSAL 45

5 AAC 28.365. Cook Inlet Rockfish Management Plan

Allow the use of deepwater release mechanisms for rockfish in mechanical jig and hand troll fisheries, as follows:

In a directed Mechanical Jig or Hand Troll fishery for any species, allow the release of rockfish with an approved deep water release mechanism.

Proposed regulatory language changes as follows:

5 AAC 28.365. Cook Inlet Rockfish Management Plan

(f) In the Cook Inlet Area, in a halibut or directed groundfish fishery, other than for rockfish, a CFEC permit holder must retain all rockfish, and, unless otherwise specified in this section or by emergency order, all rockfish in excess of 10 percent, round weight, of aggregate targeted groundfish species and halibut on board the vessel must be weighed and reported as bycatch overage on an ADF&G fish ticket. All proceeds from the sale of excess rockfish shall be surrendered to the state.

- (1) **Except that in a directed Mechanical Jig or Hand Troll fishery, rockfish may be released with an approved deep water release mechanism.**

(g) In the Cook Inlet Area, the directed rockfish fishery targets pelagic shelf rockfish, as defined in 5 AAC 39.975. During the directed rockfish fishery, a CFEC permit holder [MUST RETAIN ALL ROCKFISH] **may only release rockfish with an approved deep water release mechanism.** All nonpelagic rockfish in excess of 20 percent, combined round weight, of the gross round weight of all pelagic shelf rockfish on board the vessel must be weighed and reported as bycatch overage on an ADF&G fish ticket. All proceeds from the sale of excess rockfish shall be surrendered to the state.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Currently the retention of all rockfish is mandated in all commercial groundfish fisheries. This is due to the high prevalence of barotrauma and subsequent low survival rates in released rockfish. In recent years, the department has done a lot of work with deepwater release mechanisms to improve survivability of released rockfish in the sport fisheries, and those devices are now required for all participants in the saltwater sport fishery. Survival rates in department studies are extraordinarily high. In most commercial fisheries, these deepwater release mechanisms are not feasible, however I believe that in directed jig fisheries they could be incorporated fairly easily. Jig fisheries are not that different then the sport fishery in prosecution and each fish is handled individually and it is fairly straightforward to have release mechanisms in place on your jigging machines, which you easily use to release rockfish on your next drop of your gear. Having the option to release rockfish in this manner would have all the same benefits that it does in the sport fishery. The ability to release long-lived but low-value non-pelagic rockfish, rockfish species that the department wanted to protect, juvenile pelagic rockfish, or all rockfish if it was closed while jigging for other species; would have clear conservation and management benefits.

I previously submitted and the board passed this proposal for the PWS management area. I have personally released hundreds of rockfish with deep water release methods in PWS and the sport fishery in Cook Inlet, and I am very confident in its applicability to this fishery.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? I discussed this at length with department staff and support in concept was indicated. The department supported this proposal in PWS which is very similar management wise to Cook Inlet. The department did oppose this proposal in SE AK due to the desire for samples in non-rockfish fisheries and substantially lower concerns about rockfish populations in that area.

PROPOSED BY: Joseph Person

(EF-F27-208)

PROPOSAL 46

5 AAC 28.367. Cook Inlet Pacific Cod Management Plan.

Remove the 24-hour closure period between the Cook Inlet parallel and state-waters Pacific cod seasons, as follows:

5 AAC 28.367. Cook Inlet Pacific Cod Management Plan is amended to read:

...

(c) The commissioner shall open, by emergency order, a statewaters season for mechanical jigging machine and hand troll gear and groundfish pot gear in the Cook Inlet Area immediately following the closure of the initial federal season in the federal Central Gulf of Alaska Area for jig gear and pot gear and shall close or reopen, by emergency order, the state-waters season, as follows:

...

(k) All groundfish on board a vessel must be landed before that vessel may participate in the Cook Inlet Area state-waters Pacific cod season.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The current law requires that vessels un-bait their ground fish pots, deliver their fish and stand down for 24 hours. I would like to see the law changed, by immediately opening the state season, this would allow pots to remain baited between the federal and state cod season in the Cook Inlet area. Because of the 24 hour closure, pots often remain baited due to bad weather. This law, that requires the bait to be removed, is hard to enforce. It is very burdensome to have to take the bait out for one day and then on the following day put the bait back in the pots to start fishing. Besides, taking most of a day to haul and rebait 60 pots, this creates an extra fuel expense that should also be considered. It is important that all fish caught on the federal quota be delivered before a vessel participates in the state fishery so the quotas can be kept separate.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee?

PROPOSED BY: Ivan Stonorov

(EF-F27-047)

PROPOSAL 47

5 AAC 28.367. Cook Inlet Pacific Cod Management Plan.

Establish a small vessel (under 26 feet) gear exemption during the Cook Inlet state-waters Pacific cod season, as follows:

5 AAC 28.367(e)(2)(d) Vessels less than 26 feet in overall length registered for the Cook Inlet Area state-waters mechanical jig and hand troll season may take Pacific cod using any legal gear type for the Cook Inlet Area Pacific cod state-waters season; no more than 30 groundfish pots may be operated from a vessel less than 26 feet in overall length during the Cook Inlet Area Pacific cod state-waters jig season.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? This proposal seeks to establish an under 26' (U-26) gear exemption category for small boats participating in the Pacific Cod fishery. This length was selected because 26' is the maximum length for a vessel to be exempted from needing an LLP while participating in the federal pacific cod pot fishery. Establishing a U-26 gear exemption category in the state fishery would enable a U-26 boat the flexibility to fish pacific cod using either jigging machines or, with this proposal, up to 30 pots during the state-waters jig season. In many years, the Cook Inlet jig allocation has not been fully utilized. Allowing U-26 vessels, whose fishing time is more limited by weather, to utilize pot gear during the state-waters jig season provides a mechanism to increase potential fishing effort and profitability for small, community-based vessels. Other regions have successfully implemented gear flexibility for small boat groundfish fisheries: the West Coast's federal open-access groundfish fisheries provide gear flexibility, where fishermen can utilize a diversity of gear types that include jigging, trolling, pots or longlines. This proposal is not allocative, does not pose a conservation concern, and does not propose changes in the types of gear currently allowed in the Cook Inlet state-waters pacific cod fishery.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Consulted with area staff from the Department of Fish and Game, and other fishermen.

PROPOSED BY: Josh Wisniewski

(EF-F27-195)

PROPOSAL 48

5 AAC 28.367. Cook Inlet Pacific Cod Management Plan.

Add a 6-hour prior notice of landing requirement for the Cook Inlet Area state-waters Pacific cod fishery, as follows:

Add a new subsection (k) to read:

(k) At least six hours before landing Pacific cod, an operator of a vessel participating in a Cook Inlet Area state-waters Pacific cod fishery must notify the department, as specified on the registration form, and provide the following information:

- (1) vessel name and ADF&G number;**
- (2) date and location of landing, and estimated time of arrival;**
- (3) name of fish buyer or processor;**
- (4) estimated pounds of Pacific cod on board the vessel.**

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? There is no prior notice of landing (PNOL) regulatory requirement for vessels participating in the Cook Inlet Area (CI) state-waters Pacific cod fishery. Biological sampling of Pacific cod harvested during the fishery occurs in both Homer and Seward but is coordinated only from the Homer ADF&G office. Offloads occur quickly and prior notice of landing facilitates efficient utilization of limited staff time and ensures that sample size goals can be achieved. Participants are able to comply with existing PNOL requirements in the CI directed rockfish and lingcod fisheries and it would be expected that vessels would also be able to comply with the same requirement for the CI state-waters Pacific cod fishery.

This proposal seeks to implement PNOL requirements for the Cook Inlet Pacific cod fishery.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

(EF-F27-254)

PROPOSAL 49

5 AAC 28.360. Cook Inlet Sablefish Management Plan.

Repeal the Cook Inlet sablefish trip limit, as follows:

Eliminate the trip limit for the Cook Inlet Management District sablefish fishery and manage it solely by the Guideline Harvest Level (GHL).

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The 3,000-lb trip limit for Cook Inlet sablefish makes the fishery cost-prohibitive for larger vessels. As an owner-operator of a 56-foot longliner, the fuel burned for multiple transits to and from the grounds far outweighs the revenue from restricted deliveries. This creates a massive economic inefficiency.

Who will benefit?

Professional owner-operators will benefit from drastically reduced fuel costs and improved operational safety. The state benefits from a more efficient, lower-carbon-footprint harvest of the resource.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee?

PROPOSED BY: Brady Strate

(EF-F27-181)

PROPOSAL 50

5 AAC 28.330. Lawful gear for Cook Inlet.

Add dinglebar troll as a legal gear type in Cook Inlet Area groundfish fisheries, as follows:

5 AAC 28.330. Lawful gear for Cook Inlet Area

(a) Except as provided in (b) of this section, groundfish may be taken only by pelagic trawls, hand troll gear, longlines, pots, [OR] mechanical jigging machines, **and dinglebar troll gear.**

(g) Lingcod and rockfish may be taken only by mechanical jigging machines, [AND] hand troll gear, **and dinglebar troll gear.**

(j) dinglebar troll gear is gear that consists of a single line that is retrieved and set with a troll gurdy or hand troll gurdy with a terminally attached weight from which one or more leaders with one or more lures or baited hooks are pulled through the water while a vessel is making way; only one troll gurdy line or hand troll gurdy line may be deployed in the water at any time.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? I am requesting the board allow the use of dinglebar troll gear in the Lower Cook Inlet groundfish fisheries. Dinglebar trolling is lawful gear type in Alaska for rockfish, lingcod and halibut. It is a low impact sustainable method of fishing used in Southeast Alaska and along the west coast in state and federally managed groundfish fisheries. Allowing dinglebar troll gear to be used in Cook Inlet would allow greater gear diversity and adaptability for small boat fishermen. In times of low abundance and high expenses, this gear type allows a fisherman to look by dinglebar trolling for fish without requiring nearly as much bait as longlining. It is away to target halibut when the fish are not concentrated and spread out over a large area reducing fuel and bait expenses. Allowing dinglebar troll gear would also enable a fisherman to dinglebar troll for halibut and also fully retain and sell rockfish and lingcod under their dinglebar CFEC permits when those seasons are also open.) Allowing dinglebar troll gear to be used in Lower Cook Inlet is not allocative, and does not place an additional administrative burden on management, nor does it present a conservation issue or habitat issue. It allows for the use of groundfish fishing gear that is already authorized to be used in other management areas.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Consulted with area staff from the Department of Fish and Game and other local small boat fishermen as well and southeast Alaska and west coast dinglebar troll fishermen

PROPOSED BY: Josh Wisniewski

(EF-F27-191)
