

Alaska's Finest Fly Out Lodge Since 1970



Dear Board of Fisheries,

Please use this testimonial for support of proposal #4

"As an Alaskan fly fishing guide I have experienced first hand the behind the scenes chumming for Rainbow Trout using salmon eggs. As a new guide in Alaska, I was hired at a lodge that was big into chumming. Thinking it was the norm, I joined right in. It was amazing, we were catching more rainbows in one day than I had caught in weeks of fishing back home. I was in!

I didn't take long for me to realize though that our clients expected me to chum and the lodge did as well. There are many lodges upset that we were using this tactic to greatly increase the daily catch #'s of Rainbow's. Our chumming greatly effects the fishing quality for other lodges and their paying guests.

For example, Lodge X shows up at a hole that has been chummed and the fish are only going to bite if more chum is thrown in. The problem is that Lodge X does not chum, therefore Lodge X does not have a chance at that hole until maybe 3-4 hours later when the fish have settled back in. That is if the hole has not been chummed again in that period of time. The trout know the difference, and are just waiting for that smell to turn on their feeding instinct again. This is especially the case if there are no eggs in the water to begin with, which would be post and pre spawn. Trout are not the brightest creatures on the planet but if you continue doing this in the same rivers day after day, year after year, you begin to have trained trout. And the lodges that don't chum are losing clients and losing money. I now despise chumming but the money is good, and to quit chumming means losing my job.

For example, if you, guide #1, are out there fishing without chum and your guests are catching 5-10 trout a day repeatedly, and your other guests are out there with fellow guide #2, 3 and 4 catching 20-50 fish a day repeatedly with chum, no one is going to want to go with guide #1, therefore guide #1 gets canned. So there is big pressure on guides to chum these trout.

Isn't fly fishing all about stalking and hunting the fish of a lifetime? Getting that perfect cast with a great drift and a great presentation? Fly fishing is not about drifting your bead through a bunch of chum crazed trout just waiting for one to mistake yours as the real

thing. I personally would not want to catch a 30 inch bow that the guide spotted and then chummed up in order to get it to bite my line. I just would not feel satisfied that I had anything to do with actually catching that fish.

Lets let the fish decide who is a good guide and who is a good fishermen.”

Anonymous (because he wants to keep his job) Alaska Fishing Guide in the Bristol Bay Area. I approached this guide to get this write up, and can confirm that he was a Bristol Bay fly fishing guide.

Pat Vermillion

Email: pat@sweetwatertravel.com

Royal Coachman Lodge, Alaska www.royalcoachmanlodge.com

Copper River Lodge, Alaska www.copperriverlodge.com

Mangrove Cay Club, Bahamas www.mangrovecayclub.com

Agua Boa Lodge, Brazil www.amazonbass.com

PO Box 668

Livingston Mt 59047

406-222-0624 Office

406-223-3072 Cell

406-222-8863 Fax

Check out our fly shop at www.sweetwaterflyshop.com