

**BOARD OF FISHERIES
PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND FINFISH
DECEMBER 3–8, 2014**

PROPOSAL 1 - 5 AAC 01.610. Fishing seasons. Establish a weekly 36-hour subsistence fishing period until the two days after the closure of the commercial salmon season, as follows:

(1) during one weekly 36-hour fishing period beginning 7:00 a.m. Friday and ending 7:00 p.m. Saturday; [from May 15 until two days before the commercial opening of that salmon district, seven days per week; (2) during the commercial salmon season, only during open commercial salmon fishing periods in that district;]

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? 1. Subsistence users in the Copper River District do not have reasonable opportunity to harvest salmon outside the commercial salmon fishery and with the frequency available in other subsistence fisheries throughout the state.

2. Under the current regulations, local Alaska Department of Fish and Game managers are often put in the position of determining "reasonable opportunity" during periodic or extended closures of the commercial salmon fishery.

PROPOSED BY: George Covel (EF-C14-115)

PROPOSAL 2 - 5 AAC 01.610. Fishing seasons. Establish subsistence fishing season that opens when commercial fishing opens in May and closes when the commercial fishery closes in September, as follows:

Subsistence fishing should open starting on the date of the first commercial opener in May, and remain open until the final commercial opener in September.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Copper River Flats are an area where conditions can range from serene to catastrophic very quickly. The commercial gillnet fleet generally uses large bow pickers (most 28–35 feet) well suited to handle these conditions, although these boats are occasionally lost in this area. Boats used for subsistence fishing are generally much smaller (16–22 feet), and are presently only allowed to fish during commercial openers, except for one day a year. Subsistence fishers should not be put into a position where they have to run with large commercial boats to get their fish, nor should they be limited in the days they can fish. Rather, they should be allowed to fish when weather conditions are best for their smaller boats.

Because there is a catch limit imposed on subsistence fishers in this fishery the overall number of fish taken by subsistence fishers would not change. Only the times these fish are taken.

In return for this expanded opportunity, the subsistence fishery should be set up as a test fishery to add an extra data component to the management of this commercial fishery, which is informed by sonar data miles upriver. In seasons when the river holds ice late into the spring, and fish are not detected in the river, they still could be present in the fishery and available for harvest. A test fishery on the fishing grounds would provide an extra data component when inriver estimates are delayed. Subsistence fishers should be required to note the location, size of net, soak time and number of each species caught within 24 hours. This real-time catch per unit effort would provide managers with more tools to manage the fishery, and increase the safety margin for subsistence fishers on the Copper River Flats by allowing subsistence fishers to avoid fishing among large commercial boats, and on the best weather days.

PROPOSED BY: Native Village of Eyak (EF-C14-128)

PROPOSAL 3 - 5 AAC 01.620. Lawful gear and gear specifications. Establish certain marking requirements for that portion of a commercial drift gillnet that is being used for subsistence fishing, as follows:

(4) if a subsistence permit holder is using a 50 fathom portion of a longer gillnet, that the deployed net shall be clearly marked at 50 fathoms with a cork, permanently fixed to the corkline, of contrasting color and size, that is plainly visible when the gear is in the water.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Commercial fishermen participating in the Copper River District Subsistence Fishery commonly have a 150 fathom gillnet aboard. Clarify the regulations so that deployment of only 50 fathoms of this gear meets the lawful subsistence gear specification would eliminate the need and expense of returning to town to change nets. A method of marking this dedicated shackle of the larger gear unit shall be required to facilitate operation and enforcement. Current bag limits provide the necessary control and shall remain in effect.

PROPOSED BY: George Covel (EF-C14-116)

PROPOSAL 4 - 5 AAC 55.023. Special provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Prince William Sound Area. Prohibit the release of king salmon in Prince William Sound, as follows:

General Seasons and Limits/Prince William Sound Salt Waters.

King Salmon bag limits add: **No catch and release of king salmon, first two caught must be kept.**

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? This proposal seeks to reduce hooking mortalities of king salmon in Western Prince William Sound by addressing the current catch and release practices of a growing number of participants.

With the decline of king salmon in other areas of the Kenai Peninsula, there is increased pressure in a specific area of Western Prince William Sound salt waters. With mortality associated with hook and release fishing, an unknown growing percentage of king salmon are not able to reach spawning grounds jeopardizing future stocks.

The quality of the resource harvested or products produced should improve as future stocks increase.

The resource, future king salmon returns and the users depending on the salmon resources for recreation and a living should benefit from this change. Those anglers that catch and release only to sift for trophy king salmon with no consideration to the detrimental effects their fishing practice is causing may suffer.

A catch and release mortality rate in these salt waters with the vast amount of predatory fish is immoral, if not criminal.

PROPOSED BY: Seward Charterboat Association (EF-C14-095)

PROPOSAL 5 - 5 AAC 55.023. Special provisions for seasons, bag limits, and methods and means for the Prince William Sound Area. Close a portion of Main Bay to sport fishing, as follows:

Similar to 5 AAC 55.023(3) ... the waters of Main Bay inside Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) regulatory markers located approximately 100 feet seaward of the Main Bay Hatchery broodstock holding barrier net are closed to sport fishing;

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Main Bay Hatchery (MBH) is a state-owned ADF&G salmon hatchery managed and operated by the Prince William Sound Aquaculture Corporation (PWSAC) through a professional services agreement at no cost to the state. PWSAC installs and operates a barrier net approximately 400 feet seaward of the hatchery fish ladder between June 15 and July 31 each year. The barrier net functions as a weir allowing the hatchery operator to volitionally collect and hold returning MBH sockeye salmon broodstock prior to the brood's final migration into the fresh water brood holding pond via the hatchery fish ladder. A growing sport fishery has developed targeting the MBH sockeye salmon as the fish concentrate on the seaward side of the barrier net (similar to the downstream side of a fresh water weir when upstream passage is prevented). The integrity of the barrier net has often been compromised (snagged and abandoned snagging hooks, boat anchors, etc.) and sport fishing inside of the brood holding area has occurred. Additionally, the number of injured fish resulting from attempted snagging has increased. These injured fish must be culled from broodstock to comply with ADF&G Sockeye Salmon Culture Protocol which results in a waste of the salmon resource.

PROPOSED BY: Prince William Sound Aquaculture Corporation (EF-C14-055)

PROPOSAL 6 - 5 AAC 55.023. Special provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Prince William Sound Area. Prohibit the use of bait for salmon once the bag limit has been achieved on drainages crossed by the Copper River Highway, as follows:

Artificial tackle only when fishing for salmon for all fresh water drainages crossed by the Copper River Highway from and including the Eyak River to the Million Dollar Bridge, including Clear Creek (mile 42) when daily bag limit has been reached.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Although there may not be an apparent conservation concern, there has been a growing sociological concern from residents of Cordova regarding catch and release of salmon with bait. The major tributaries that are fished are primarily intertidal, and according to an Alaska Department of Fish and Game (department) study, catch and release mortality is dramatically increased up to 60% when using bait. This study was conducted on the Little Susitna River by the department. The study's conclusion was for coho release in the intertidal areas the mortality is very high, especially with a fishery with a high catch and release component. They also concluded that in such areas, catch and release may not be a viable management option. This proposal does not change bag limits or reduce opportunity, but addresses the social concerns that have been brewing for years by reducing mortality on a resource that is of great importance to the community of Cordova. Statistics are available from a July 2010 United States Forest Service study to show the catch and release numbers over a three-year period for the Copper River Delta. This information will give ideas of the numbers of fish that are released in these intertidal areas.

PROPOSED BY: Copper River/Prince William Sound Advisory Committee (HQ-F14-006)

PROPOSAL 7 - 5 AAC 55.033. Copper River Delta Special Management Area for Trout. Modify the Copper River Delta Special Trout Management Area to allow retention of trout from June 15–April 14, as follows:

Copper River Delta Special Trout Management Area, in all fresh waters draining into the Gulf of Alaska south of Miles Glacier, east of the Copper River, and west of Cape Suckling, rainbow/steelhead and cutthroat, June 15–April 14, two per day, only one over 20". Only unbaited, single-hook, artificial lures are allowed year round.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? In the mid-90s, the Board of Fish at the request of this advisory committee established a special trout management area east of the Copper River. This was done to protect the most previous trout habitation the delta due to a private development of a road to a large coal deposit in the Bering River drainage. To this day the road has not been built. This area is very hard to access and even harder now that the Copper

River Highway is washed out. Harvest levels are extremely low. This proposal establishes similar bag limits found on the West Delta.

PROPOSED BY: Copper River/Prince William Sound Advisory Committee (HQ-F14-005)

PROPOSAL 8 - 5 AAC 55.022. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Prince William Sound Area. Reduce bag and possession limit for lingcod in Prince William Sound Area from two per day, four in possession to one per day, two in possession, as follows:

For these reasons we respectfully request that the Board of Fisheries lower the existing bag limit for lingcod in Prince William Sound water as follows.

One Lingcod per day with two in possession. Size limit of not less than 35" for a whole fish and not less than 28" with the head removed.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Seward Charterboat Association is deeply concerned about the abundance levels of lingcod in the waters of Prince William Sound.

Based on our observations on the grounds, it has become clear that populations of lingcod have declined sharply in the last several years. In addition to the difficulty in finding these fish, we are concerned that with the implementation of the Halibut Catch Share Plan, there will be motivation to make up for the lowered halibut bag limit by fully utilizing the two fish lingcod bag limit in Prince William Sound, causing even more pressure on the resource.

Our proposed changes would make enforcement easier, as the bag limit would effectively be one lingcod per person in any area along the entire North Gulf Coast, east from Gore Point to Kayak Island.

Being that lingcod are relatively fast grown and reach maturity in five years, we would like to revisit this issue in future board cycles to insure that the resource is healthy and may be adjusted upward to reflect improvement of condition of the stocks.

PROPOSED BY: Seward Charterboat Association (EF-C14-093)

PROPOSAL 9 - 5 AAC 55.023. Special provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Prince William Sound Area. Allow an additional line to jig for bait when saltwater sport fishing in Prince William Sound, as follows:

Please add this section to the statewide general regulations or just for Prince William Sound chapter for sport fishing: (1) an additional line may be used to jig for herring and smelt as bait as specified in 5 AAC 75.030.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? We were cited by an overzealous Fish and Game trooper for having an extra line with eight herring hooks on it. We had no fish on the boat. We are allowed up to 15 hooks on a herring rig or two hooks on a halibut rig at one time but we are not allowed one hook on one line and eight herring hooks on the other at the same time. You have a bag limit for halibut anyway. You are not going to catch a halibut on a herring rig. With limited time to fish and limited fish to catch, you should be able to bait fish while you are halibut fishing.

PROPOSED BY: Michael Gott (EF-C14-101)

PROPOSAL 10 - 5 AAC 24.370. Prince William Sound Management and Salmon Enhancement Allocation Plan. Change set gillnet component of Prince William Sound Management and Salmon Enhancement Allocation Plan, as follows:

Change the language in 5 AAC 24.370. PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND MANAGEMENT AND SALMON ENHANCEMENT ALLOCATION PLAN. Under section:

(f) If the set gillnet gear group catches **four** [five] percent or more of the previous five-year average ex-vessel value of the total common property fishery for enhanced salmon as calculated by the department under (c) of this section, the year following this calculation beginning on July 10, the commissioner shall, by emergency order, open set gillnet fishing periods totaling no more than 36 hours per week.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? 5 AAC 24.370. PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND MANAGEMENT AND SALMON ENHANCEMENT ALLOCATION PLAN. Correct an error in the regulation.

The regulation under part (b) clearly states that “The ex-vessel value allocation of enhanced salmon stocks for the set gillnet gear group is four percent of the total allocation” but in part (f) it states that “If the set gillnet gear group catches five percent or more of the previous five-year average ex-vessel value of the total common property fishery for enhanced salmon as calculated by the department under (c) of this section, the year following this calculation beginning on July 10, the commissioner shall, by emergency order, open set gillnet fishing periods totaling no more than 36 hours per week.”

If the set gillnet allocation is four percent then why is the set gillnet fishery allowed to catch five percent of the total common property of enhanced salmon before the allocation plan is triggered? If the error in regulation is not corrected the set gill gear group will continue to catch 25% above their allocation.

PROPOSED BY: Jeff Olsen (EF-C14-039)

PROPOSAL 11 - 5 AAC 24.370. Prince William Sound Management and Salmon Enhancement Allocation Plan. Change Prince William Sound Management and Salmon Enhancement Allocation Plan to include Valdez Fisheries Development Association in calculation, as follows:

Remove the language in 5 AAC 24.370. PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND MANAGEMENT AND SALMON ENHANCEMENT ALLOCATION PLAN. Under

[(J) IN THIS SECTION, “ENHANCED SALMON STOCKS” MEANS SALMON PRODUCED BY THE PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND AQUACULTURE CORPORATION”]

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? 5 AAC 24.370. PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND MANAGEMENT AND SALMON ENHANCEMENT ALLOCATION PLAN. The plan should include the value of all enhanced salmon produced in the Prince William Sound (PWS) region. The value of enhanced salmon production from Valdez Fisheries Development Association’s (VFDA) Solomon Gulch Hatchery is not included in the management plan. The construction of the Solomon Gulch Hatchery is financed by funds from the State of Alaska and continues to use state financing. The original hatchery operation permit included chum production intended for the drift gillnet fleet which never was accomplished.

5 AAC 33.364. Southeastern Alaska Area Enhanced Salmon Allocation Management Plan includes the value of all enhanced salmon produced in the Southeastern Alaska region. Both 5 AAC 24.370. and 5 AAC 33.364. stated goals are to provide a fair and reasonable allocation of the harvest of enhanced salmon among the commercial fisheries.

How can there be fair and reasonable enhanced salmon allocation when a large percentage of the enhanced salmon resource is not included the plan? What is the difference between a hatchery built by the State of Alaska, Prince William Sound Aquaculture Corporation (PWSAC), or VFDA? They all used public funds for their construction and startup operations. Why is the PWS seine fleet allowed exclusive access and benefit to VFDA’s publicly financed enhanced salmon production? The best solution short of allowing the drift and set net fleet access to the Port of Valdez is to include the value of Solomon Gulch Hatchery production into 5 AAC 24.370.

If all of the enhanced salmon produced in Prince William Sound is not included in the Prince William Sound Enhanced Salmon Allocation plan then seine fishery will continue to receive a disproportionate share of the enhanced salmon.

This proposal does not propose to reallocate VFDA hatchery production to the other commercial users, but to include the value of the enhanced salmon in the plan so all PWS common property fisheries can benefit from VFDA enhanced salmon production.

PROPOSED BY: Michael Bowen (EF-C14-041)

PROPOSAL 12 - 5 AAC 24.370. Prince William Sound Management and Salmon Enhancement Allocation Plan. Change Prince William Sound Management and Salmon Enhancement Allocation Plan to exclude Gulkana Hatchery production in calculation, as follows:

Add language in 5 AAC 24.370. PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND MANAGEMENT AND SALMON ENHANCEMENT ALLOCATION PLAN under

(j) In this section, “enhanced salmon stocks” means salmon produced by the Prince William Sound Aquaculture Corporation **and excluding enhanced salmon stocks produced by the Gulkana Hatchery.**

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? 5 AAC 24.370. PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND MANAGEMENT AND SALMON ENHANCEMENT ALLOCATION PLAN (j) Remove the Gulkana Hatchery from the allocation plan.

When the current was plan was developed, the main argument by members of the seine fleet for keeping Valdez Fisheries Development Association (VFDA) out of the plan was that “The gillnet fleet was making a living from the wild stocks on Copper River while the seine fleet did not have healthy wild stocks to fish on.” The Board of Fisheries did not take in account that Gulkana Hatchery produces enhanced salmon returning to the Copper River. Gulkana hatchery production should not be allowed to be used against the drift fleet in allowing VFDA to be left out the allocation plan.

The drift fleet has disagreements with Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) on how they determine the value of the returning enhanced salmon. Gulkana is different than the other hatcheries in the region because the wild and enhanced salmon enter the fishery and river together. ADF&G has to collect otoliths from the salmon catch throughout the Copper River sockeye run to try and determine the percentage of wild to enhanced salmon. ADF&G has a rough estimate of the Gulkana enhanced salmon that is in the catch and the data shows that enhanced component is very small in May when the drift fleet is receiving the highest prices of the year. The main disagreement is with how the department uses the average values from whole season (May through July), while the bulk of the returning enhanced salmon are caught in July when salmon prices are down. This results in the fishery being overvalued and is not a fair and reasonable allocation. Relieving the department of having to determine the value of the enhanced salmon on the Copper River will eliminate these disagreements.

In the spirit of compromise this proposal would leave VFDA’s enhanced salmon out of the plan as well.

PROPOSED BY: Michael Bowen (EF-C14-042)

PROPOSAL 13 - 5 AAC 24.370. Prince William Sound Management and Salmon Enhancement Allocation Plan. Open certain waters of College Fjord to purse seine fishery before July 21, as follows:

Waters of College north of Point Pakenham and Golden Lagoon at 60.58.772 147.59.787 would be open to both seine and drift gillnet gear when the department warrants this area open based on sockeye and pink escapement goals within the Coghill River.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Allow seine gear north of Point Pakenham prior to July 21 to harvest pink and sockeye salmon. This has historically been a shared area between seine and drift gillnet. On large or early pink returns, the majority of the return enters the Coghill River before July 21. The drift gillnet fleet does not target these pinks and harvestable surplus fish go uncaught. The seine fleet should also be returned to their historical access to wild stock Coghill sockeye that was re-allocated to the drift fleet based on a now abandoned allocation plan. A geographically perpendicular line from Pakenham to Golden Lagoon would be preferred to eliminate lines intersecting the shore at odd angles which can cause difficulties. This line is still well above the College Fjord Glacier Dam and should eliminate chum interception concerns.

PROPOSED BY: Thomas Nelson (EF-C14-106)

PROPOSAL 14 - 5 AAC 24.370. Prince William Sound Management and Salmon Enhancement Allocation Plan. Reestablish historic purse seine gear access to Coghill Lake sockeye salmon in Coghill River terminal area, as follows:

Pending input from gillnet representatives, it is anticipated that the Coghill sockeye fishery will be a terminal style fishery targeting returning sockeye and the line will be drawn close enough to the Coghill River to minimize interception of chum salmon. It is not intended that the seiners will have exclusive access to Coghill sockeye.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Restore historic seine access to Coghill Lake sockeye returns. Seine gear lost access to Coghill Lake sockeye stocks when the salmon allocation plan was originally implemented. At that time, both wild stocks and enhanced stocks were considered in the allocation matrix. Wild stocks are no longer part of the allocation matrix and historic seine access should be restored.

PROPOSED BY: Northwest & Alaska Seiners' Association (EF-C14-135)

PROPOSAL 15 - 5 AAC 24.370. Prince William Sound Management and Salmon Enhancement Allocation Plan. Establish standards to alleviate gear conflicts in Esther Subdistrict during the commercial pink salmon fishery, as follows:

The intention of this proposal is to resolve inseason conflict with input and compromise by both gear types and not to gain an advantage by one gear type over the other.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Gear conflict and congestion in the Esther subdistrict. This is a placeholder proposal to provide time for gillnet and seine representatives to come to a compromise agreement regarding gear conflict in the Esther subdistrict during pink salmon season and submit proposed regulatory language as an RC.

PROPOSED BY: Northwest & Alaska Seiners' Association (EF-C14-134)

PROPOSAL 16 - 5 AAC 24.370. Prince William Sound Management and Salmon Enhancement Allocation Plan. Establish alternating purse seine and drift gillnet fishing periods in certain areas to alleviate gear conflicts in Esther Subdistrict during the commercial pink salmon fishery, as follows:

For Esther Island in Prince William Sound, I propose that the fishery be split up by way of odd / even day harvesting. The gillnetters get the area East of Hodgkins Point on the odd days (August 1, 3, 5 etc.) The gillnetters get the area west of Hodgkins Point on the even days (Aug 2, 4, 6 etc.) The seiners get the area East of Hodgkins Point on the even days and the area west of Hodgkins point on the odd days.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The issue is gear conflict between seiners and drift gillnetters during the pink salmon harvest around Esther Island in Prince William Sound. The fishery is becoming more and more out of control and tempers are flaring between both gear types. This proposal will create a safer, more controlled fishery with no apparent loss to either group.

PROPOSED BY: Paul Harder (EF-C14-037)

PROPOSAL 17 - 5 AAC 24.331. Gillnet specifications and operations. Allow use of monofilament mesh in Prince William Sound drift gillnet fishery, as follows:

A new section in 24.331 Gillnet Specifications and Operations would be added as follows:

(9) Notwithstanding 5 AAC 39.250(c), in the Prince William Sound Region, a person may use single mesh web in a drift gillnet.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Allow the use of monofilament web in the drift gillnet fishery. The cost of web has been gone up approximately

30% over the last 10 years and is expected to increase the next couple of years. The cost of high end fishing gear is now \$24.50/lb. while mono cost about 1/2 the price at \$12.46/lb.

Mono was approved for use in the Cook Inlet fishery and that fishery has shown that over time some fishermen will choose to use mono web while others continue to use the more conventional web. We are just asking for the opportunity for those who wish to use mono that choice.

PROPOSED BY: Michael Bowen (EF-C14-040)

PROPOSAL 18 - 5 AAC 24.331. Gillnet specifications and operations. Change drift gillnet gear specifications in the Copper River District, as follows:

5 AAC 24.331 (1) would read “each drift gillnet vessel may operate not more than one gillnet; no drift gillnet may exceed 150 fathoms in length, hung measure **and, in the Copper River District, mesh hung at not more than a 2:1 ratio**; no more than two vessels may operate together, and while operating together may not have on board each vessel gillnets of more than 150 fathoms in length, hung measure;

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Stop the practice of “rolling up” king salmon in waters inside the Barrier Islands off the mouth of the Copper River.

The term “rolling up” is used by drift gillnetters in the Copper River District (CRD) and refers to hanging excess gillnet mesh from their maximum 150 fathoms of float line to create more of a drapery effect that entangles king salmon rather than actually gillnetting them. This method is very effective in the shallower waters inside the Barrier Islands as king salmon mill near the mouth of the Copper River. In regulation 5 AAC 24.331 (7) in order to restrict the gillnetting of king salmon, gillnets with mesh size greater than six inches are not allowed in the CRD before July 15. “Rolling up” is an end around this regulation. Under current language in 5 AAC 24.331 (1) in the Copper River and Bering River Districts, each drift gillnet vessel may operate no more than one gillnet and no drift gillnet may exceed 150 fathoms in length, hung measure. “Hung measure” in 5 AAC 39.975 (definitions) means “the maximum length of the cork line when measured wet or dry with traction applied to one end only.” By law then, drift gillnetters are allowed to hang as much lineal mesh as they desire lending to the practice of “rolling up”. A standard sockeye net, to our knowledge, uses a hang ratio of 2:1. A change in the regulation is needed limiting gillnets used in the CRD, to a 2:1 hang ratio (mesh horizontal length up to 2x the length of the float line). Enforcement would be able to count horizontal mesh openings within a set distance of float line to verify the 2:1 ratio.

PROPOSED BY: Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee (EF-C14-145)

PROPOSAL 19 - 5 AAC 24.378. Use of aircraft unlawful. Allow use of spotter planes in Prince William Sound salmon purse seine fisheries, as follows:

During open commercial salmon fishing periods [NO PERSONS MAY USE AN] **aircrafts may be used** to locate salmon for the commercial taking of those fish or to direct commercial fishing operations.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Fish spotting planes should be able to fly during commercial salmon fishing seine openers in Prince William Sound.

Currently pilots are not allowed to fly during the openers:

- 1) When the fishery is open 7 days a week, for example Port Chalmers and AFK, there is no legal time to fly and some planes have been flying anyway for other reasons- parts, supplies, etc.
- 2) Safety reasons- pilots are being pushed into such a small time slot for flying that they are often being forced to fly in the dark and in poor weather conditions.
- 3) In talking with some troopers, it is a very difficult law to enforce.
- 4) To my knowledge PWS is the only area that planes are restricted to not fly during the fishery openers, for example Southeast and Kodiak salmon seine fisheries do not have this restriction on fish spotting planes.

PROPOSED BY: Scott McKenzie (EF-C14-175)

PROPOSAL 20 - 5 AAC 24.378. Use of aircraft unlawful. Allow use of spotter planes in Prince William Sound salmon purse seine fisheries, as follows:

It is legal to use aircraft in Prince William Sound (PWS) during commercial fishing openers.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Aircraft should be allowed to fly in PWS during commercial fishing openers because the Alaska Department of Fish and Game has no reason for it to be illegal. Therefore, it becomes a law censoring who we can talk to and the content of that conversation.

PROPOSED BY: Kris Phillips (EF-C14-132)

PROPOSAL 21 - 5 AAC 24.378. Use of aircraft unlawful. Allow use of spotter planes in Prince William Sound salmon purse seine fisheries, as follows:

"Aircraft can be flown during openers but not allowed to set boats on fish or communicate in aiding boats to catch fish during the opener."

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The issue is flying airplanes during the openers. In the past, the openers were fished one day off, one day on. This allowed

the boats who had pilots to be able to fly on the days that where not being fished; however we have seen more and more openers every day and the trend of that happening is more likely. Only being allowed to fly before and after the opener leaves a small window of light and leaves a huge safety issue for the pilots and aircraft. Due to the time at night that it closes, it is very hard to leave Cordova after it closes and do a survey of the fishing area that is open (due to the large area that the Prince William Sounds (PWS) seine fleet has).

Often I am only able to do a small section and then return and make it back before dark. Pilots have even had to stay the night out on the sound with our planes because we ran out of light. Mixed with weather, this is a huge safety risk and a very uncomfortable feeling.

Pilots need to bring parts or crew to boats during the openers and it has become a pain for me to have to call the troopers to let them know I will be out there. First off it's my airplane, and second, I have a valid license from the FAA that allows me to fly anywhere I want at any given time; even during an opener. I feel that I do not have to tell the troopers what I am doing as long as I am not aiding boats in the recovery or catching of fish. But yet I feel someday someone will get a ticket for doing just that and will spend a ton of money to prove that they are innocent. This law is unenforceable, they cannot say when we can and can't fly. They can tell us we can't set boats on fish, but not when we can fly.

As long as I am not setting boats on fish, I am not breaking the law. I feel guilty just taking parts out to boats and the risk factor with the light that is left after an opener is high and someday, if this doesn't get changed, someone will get hurt. What happens when there is a 48 or 60 hour opener for the seine fleet? We need to be able to fly to bring parts and crew or if someone gets hurt take him off the boat. We shouldn't have to feel that we have to notify the troopers to do this.

The solution is to allow aircraft to be flown during the openers but not allowed to set boats on fish or communicate with boats in the aid of catching boats during the opener.

This would also be a lot easier for the troopers so they could ease their work load on trying to catch someone flying during the opener.

So first, this is a safety issue the way it is right now and second, it would allow the pilots to do their job without the fear of getting a ticket just because he dropped off a crew member or took out a part to a boat. And third, if a pilot got a ticket, it would more than likely not hold up in court and only cost the pilot a lot of money to defend. The trooper would have to prove that the pilot put the boat on fish and not only that, but caught the exact fish that he saw, not another school of fish but that exact fish.

PROPOSED BY: Bruce Stamper (EF-C14-133)

PROPOSAL 22 - 5 AAC 34.368. Wally Noerenberg (Esther Island) Hatchery Management Plan. Identify certain landmarks in description of the Wally Noerenberg Hatchery Terminal Harvest Area using latitude and longitude coordinates, as follows:

5 AAC 24.368

(c) The Wally Noerenberg Hatchery Terminal Harvest Area consists of the waters of Lake and Quillian Bay inside of a line from Hodgkin Point **latitude and longitude** to Esther Light **latitude and longitude**, [AS MARKED] excluding the waters of the Wally Noerenberg Special Harvest Area.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Hodgkin Point and Esther Light are both identified as “as marked.” Both of these points need to be identified by latitude and longitude coordinates. This would eliminate any assuming on where you might be fishing close to the line. Adverse weather conditions often make it difficult to see Hodgkin Point and Ester Light at the same time. I see this as a benefit to both fishers and enforcement.

PROPOSED BY: Fred Marinkovich (EF-C14-075)

PROPOSAL 23 - 5 AAC 28.210. Fishing seasons for Prince William Sound Area. Close Prince William Sound management area to commercial lingcod harvest when inside and outside district guideline harvest levels are achieved, including lingcod caught as bycatch and directed harvest, as follows:

In both inside and outside districts, when the guideline harvest level (GHL) is reached - all commercial retention of lingcod should stop— both directed and as bycatch. The outside district GHL should remain at current levels.

Furthermore, the GHL for lingcod in the inside district should be reduced to 4,000 pounds until such time as this is constraining the commercial harvest or until an adequate stock assessment is completed that allows for higher sustainable harvest levels.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Seward Charterboat Association is deeply concerned about the abundance levels of lingcod in the waters of Prince William Sound (PWS). It is our belief that it is time to take measures for conserving the lingcod resource. The low ex-vessel price of lingcod and the fact that they have no swim bladder and therefore a high survival rate, insures that this proposal will have a minimal financial impact on the commercial sector and a high likelihood of increasing conservation.

Our understanding is the Prince William Sound Lingcod GHL is currently set at 90 percent of the commercial harvest over a time series. In addition since 2009, the bycatch of lingcod has been allowed to continue, even when the GHL is exceeded.

From our perspective, the normal way to manage a directed fishery is to take a stock assessment and determine the total allowable catch based on sustainable fishing levels determined by the

biology of a specific type of fish. The way it is being done now, we have no basis for determining if overfishing has or is occurring. While a GHM is not a hard cap, if fishing is allowed over the GHM it is essentially a rule with no mechanism to prevent overfishing.

Clearly the ADF&G data shows a sharp decline in harvest of lingcod by the commercial sector both in directed fishery and bycatch. The harvest steeply declined in both inside and outside districts since 2009. This corresponds to our observation that abundance levels in both inside and outside waters for sport fishing have declined during the same period.

While we are reluctant to get involved with proposals regarding commercial fishing practices, feel compelled to ask the Board of Fisheries to take action not only to reduce the sport harvest, but also take actions to protect the resource from commercial over harvest until such time that either a stock assessment is done or there is some confidence that abundance levels are back to the pre-2009 levels.

Our suggested changes in regulation are being suggested solely for the purpose of sustainability and this proposal should be taken with the prior proposal {currently EF-C14-93} in which we are suggesting that the sport harvest should be lowered by 50%, also for the conservation of lingcod stocks. There is no intent to make this an allocative measure or to inflict significant financial harm on the commercial sector.

PROPOSED BY: Seward Charterboat Association (EF-C14-094)

PROPOSAL 24 - 5 AAC 28.210. Fishing seasons for Prince William Sound Area. Clarify that lingcod may only be retained from July 1 through December 31, as follows:

5 AAC 28.210(c) is amended to read:

(c) Lingcod may be taken only **from July 1 through December 31, unless closed earlier by emergency order,**

(1) in a directed fishery [ONLY FROM JULY 1 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, UNLESS CLOSED EARLIER BY EMERGENCY ORDER]; and

(2) as bycatch up to 20 percent by weight of the directed finfish species on board a vessel, unless the commissioner closes the season and opens another season in which the bycatch is prohibited or further limited; bycatch taken under this paragraph is counted as part of any bycatch limit established under 5 AAC 28.070(b).

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Lingcod may only be taken between July 1 and December 31. While this is stated in 5 AAC 28.210(c)(1) regarding the directed fishery, 5 AAC 28.210(c)(2) has language concerning the retention of lingcod as

bycatch which does not clearly state that lingcod caught as bycatch may only be retained after July 1. Clarification of this language will make the regulation easier to understand and will aid in enforcement.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F14-067)

PROPOSAL 25 - 5 AAC 28.210. Fishing seasons for Prince William Sound Area; and 5 AAC 28.230. Lawful gear for Prince William Sound Area. Change Prince William Sound Inside District sablefish season opening and closing date for pot gear, as follows:

(b) Sablefish may be taken in the Inside District from **March 15** through **September 30** **using pot gear, and April 15 through August 31 for other fixed gear types.**

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Start date for state-waters sablefish season is currently April 15, although start date in federal waters is mid-March. An earlier start date for the pot gear only would promote the use of this gear type and therefore minimize the conflicts with orcas that have plagued the fishery since its inception.

PROPOSED BY: Rod Jensen (HQ-F14-018)

PROPOSAL 26 - 5 AAC 28.263. Prince William Sound Pollock Pelagic Trawl Management Plan. Establish a lower trip limit in Prince William Sound walleye pollock pelagic trawl fishery and disallow tendering during the fishery, as follows:

Make Prince William Sound pollock trawl trip limits of 200,000 pounds with no tendering allowed. Boats would have to deliver their own fish to the processor.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Prince William Sound pollock trawl catch limits. Smaller catch limits would slow the fishery down allowing the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to more effectively manage the fishery and its bycatch.

PROPOSED BY: Bill Fejes for Polar Seafoods (EF-C14-113)

PROPOSAL 27 - 5 AAC 28.230. Lawful gear for Prince William Sound Area; and 5 AAC 28.XXX. Prince William Sound Pollock Purse Seine and Jig Gear Management Plan. Establish directed commercial purse seine and jig pollock fisheries in Prince William Sound, as follows:

The Alaska Board of Fisheries should include the Prince William Sound (PWS) pollock management into the other state water pollock fisheries currently being considered by the pollock working group and include purse seine and jig as alternative gear types and to provide

opportunity to 58 foot and smaller trawl vessels to harvest quota before the larger Kodiak trawlers harvest the entire quota.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The PWS pollock fishery in its current form occurs too quickly for smaller vessels and local processors to effectively participate. Additionally, the PWS Pollock Management Plan should be consistent with the other state water pollock management plans currently being considered by the pollock working group.

PROPOSED BY: Northwest & Alaska Seiners' Association (EF-C14-131)

PROPOSAL 28 - 5 AAC 28.265. Prince William Sound Rockfish Management Plan.
Change the amount of rockfish that may be retained as bycatch during Pacific cod and walleye pollock fisheries, as follows:

5 AAC 28.265(b) is amended to read:

(b) In the Prince William Sound Area, when fishing in a directed fishery, other than for rockfish, a CFEC permit holder must retain all rockfish, except that

...

(3) during a [STATE-WATERS] season for Pacific cod, [WITH GROUND FISH POTS, MECHANICAL JIGGING MACHINES AND HAND TROLL GEAR, OR LONGLINE GEAR] all rockfish in excess of five percent, round weight, of all Pacific cod on board the vessel must be weighed and reported as bycatch overage on an ADF&G fish ticket; any proceeds from the sale of excess rockfish shall be surrendered to the state;

(4) during the directed pollock pelagic trawl fishery, all rockfish in excess of 0.5 percent, round weight, of all pollock on board the vessel must be weighed and reported as bycatch overage on an ADF&G fish ticket; any 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? This regulation defines the percent of rockfish legally retainable as bycatch for all Prince William Sound (PWS) groundfish fisheries; for fisheries not named in this regulation, 10 percent is the legally retainable amount (5 AAC 28.265(b)(1)). The PWS parallel Pacific cod fishery is not named in this regulation and therefore the maximum retainable amount of rockfish is 10 percent. The parallel Pacific cod fishery has retained an average of 2.5 percent rockfish as bycatch between 2006 and 2013, with a maximum of 5.8 percent retained in 2010, the only year to exceed 5 percent. The state-waters Pacific cod fishery, which targets the same species, is already restricted to 5 percent rockfish bycatch, and has retained an average of 4.3 percent rockfish as bycatch over the same time period. Restricting both Pacific cod fisheries to 5 percent rockfish bycatch will provide consistency in the regulations, and removing the gear types from regulatory language will simplify interpretation.

The PWS directed pollock pelagic trawl fishery is also not named in this regulation, but is limited by regulation 5 AAC 28.263(d) to no more than 5 percent total bycatch. The department

has managed within that 5 percent for a rockfish bycatch cap of 0.5 percent in this fishery since 2003. Having this clearly defined in regulation will benefit fishery managers, participants, and enforcement.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F14-069)

PROPOSAL 29 - 5 AAC 28.265. Prince William Sound Rockfish Management Plan. Require retention of all rockfish in the sablefish fishery on gear sets below 150 fathoms, remove rockfish bycatch limits and requirements, such that proceeds from rockfish bycatch are not surrendered to the state, as follows:

During the sablefish fishery, gear sets below 150 fathoms will retain all rockfish (no bycatch limit or surrendering of the proceeds will apply).

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? High populations of the rockfish below 150 fathoms. The primary species of rockfish noted are: shorttraker, roughey, and thornyhead. Spot shrimp and side stripe shrimp populations are depressed in rockfish concentration areas. Consequently shrimp populations are unable to repopulate to their historic levels.

PROPOSED BY: Jon Van Hyning (HQ-F14-008)

PROPOSAL 30 - 5 AAC 28.267. Prince William Sound Pacific Cod Management Plan. Eliminate closure of Pacific cod pot season at 90 percent of guideline harvest level and combine pot and jig allocations, provide a step up/step down allocation depending on achievement of guideline harvest level, as follows:

Remove the 90% allocation (which triggers season closure for pot gear). Combine the pot and jig gear allocation sectors and if they achieve their allocation in any given year, that allocation would increase by 5%, up to a maximum of 30%. Inversely, if they do not achieve their allocation, it would decrease by 5%, to a minimum of 15%.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Under current regulations there is no effective quota for pot gear because the existing “trigger point” which closes hook-and-line fishing at 85% is consistently overshot. With a 90% “closure trigger” for pot gear, nothing remains for this gear type, thereby discouraging its usage.

PROPOSED BY: Rod Jensen (HQ-F14-017)

PROPOSAL 31 - 5 AAC 28.206. Prince William Sound Area registration; and 5 AAC 28.267. Prince William Sound Pacific Cod Management Plan. Change Pacific cod allocation to provide 10 percent for jig gear until June 10, after which it will then be available to pot gear, and designate the state-waters jig fishery as nonexclusive, as follows:

Allocate 10% of the guideline harvest level (GHL) to the jig fleet prior to June 10 and make the fishery nonexclusive. After June 10, the remaining quota would be available for a rollover to the pot and longline fleet and the jig fishery would revert to federal B season parallel status.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Opportunity for a state water cod jig fishery is limited in Prince William Sound (PWS) due to the rapid harvest of Pacific cod by the pot and longline fleets. The exclusive registration requirement for the state water jig fishery in PWS provides a disincentive for jig fishermen to register for the state fishery because the remaining quota for the jig fleet is minimal after the pot and longline gear seasons have closed. This is only an issue when the federal parallel season closes.

PROPOSED BY: Gregory R. Gabriel, Jr. (EF-C14-136)

PROPOSAL 32 - 5 AAC 28.250. Closed waters in Prince William Sound Area. Correct coordinates within the described closed waters section for groundfish at Zaikof Point, as follows: 5 AAC 28.250(a) is amended to read:

(a) Groundfish may not be taken with pots in the waters enclosed by lines from Point Whitshed to Point Bentinck, from Cape Hinchinbrook Light to Seal Rocks Light to Zaikof Point **at 60° 18.48' N. lat., 146° 55.10' W. long.** [(60° 19' N. LAT., 146° 55' W. LONG.)], and from a point at 60° 11' N. lat., 147° 20' W. long. on the northwest side of Montague Island, north to a point at 60° 30' N. lat., 147° 20' W. long., then east to a point at 60° 30' N. lat., 147° 00' W. long., then northeast to Knowles Head (60° 41' N. lat., 146° 37.50' W. long.), except that groundfish may be taken with pots

(1) within Orca Bay, east of 146° 37.50' W. long., excluding the waters of Port Gravina north of a line from Gravina Point to Red Head at 60° 40.25' N. lat., 146° 30.22' W. long.;

(2) in waters not more than 75 fathoms deep within waters enclosed by a line from Johnstone Point Light to Montague Point at 60° 23' N. lat., 147° 06' W. long., to Middle Point at 60° 20.50' N. lat., 147° W. long. to Schooner Rock Light (Zaikof Point) to Cape Hinchinbrook Light.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Precisely defining the coordinates of geographical points is important and has become more common in the regulations. Coordinates that define Zaikof Point in this regulation do not match those in 5 AAC 28.263 which were updated at the December 2011 Alaska Board of Fisheries meeting. Accuracy and consistency within regulations will benefit fishery managers, participants, and enforcement.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F14-068)

PROPOSAL 33 - 5 AAC 24.361. Copper River King Salmon Management Plan. Establish a biological escapement goal of 28,000 king salmon for the Copper River drainage, as follows:

Amend the *King Salmon Management Plan* to achieve a BEG of 28,000 kings, rather than a sustainable escapement goal of 24,000.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (department) has often responded to declining king stocks by lowering the escapement goal. Recently this practice led to a management disaster on the Kuskokwim River. The department is still trying to explain how a lowered goal for king salmon in the Kenai is now justified by its newer sonar technology, when the old technology was touted as being very accurate at counting kings. The Miles Lake Sonar does not distinguish between kings and sockeye, so the department uses several much less reliable methods to predict escapement. Several years ago, after not meeting escapement, the goal was lowered from a minimum 28,000 to 24,000 kings. The Alaska Board of Fisheries (board) has the authority to set biological escapement goal (BEG) and has done so for many other king salmon stocks, while directing the division to manage for that goal. The board should look at the recent restrictions placed on all fisheries, as well as not meeting even the reduced goal and determine whether the Copper River kings deserve a biological escapement goal more in line with historical escapement numbers rather than based on the currently depleted runs and imprecise counting methods.

PROPOSED BY: Fairbanks Advisory Committee (EF-C14-159)

PROPOSAL 34 - 5 AAC 24.361. Copper River King Salmon Management Plan. Amend the Copper River King Salmon Management Plan to provide additional management measures for king salmon in the Glennallen Subdistrict subsistence fishery as follows:

(e) In the Glennallen Subdistrict subsistence salmon fishery, if the commissioner determines that additional conservation measures are necessary to achieve the escapement goals, the commissioner may, by emergency order, close the Glennallen Subdistrict subsistence fishery season and immediately reopen a season during which **any one or a combination of the following restrictions may be taken to reduce king salmon harvest in the Glennallen Subdistrict subsistence salmon fishery in the following priority order:**

(1) a bag limit is established for king salmon taken by fish wheel;

(2) the bag limit for king salmon taken by fish wheel or dip net is reduced;

(3) the retention of king salmon taken by either fish wheel or dip net is prohibited;

[OR]

(4) modify methods and means [ARE MODIFIED TO REDUCE KING SALMON HARVEST IN THE GLENNALLEN SUBDISTRICT SUBSISTENCE SALMON FISHERY].

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? In 2011, the Alaska Board of Fisheries modified the *Copper River King Salmon Management Plan* to provide the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (department) emergency order authority to restrict the harvest of king

salmon in the Glennallen Subdistrict subsistence fishery to ensure the escapement goal is met. However, current language within the *Copper River King Salmon Management Plan* is limited to either prohibiting retention of king salmon or modifying methods and means. Explicit authority is needed to set or alter bag limits within the Glennallen Subdistrict subsistence fishery. The language proposed herein provides the department with emergency order authority to establish a bag limit for king salmon taken with a fish wheel and/or reduce the bag limit for king salmon taken with either a fish wheel or dip net while still providing reasonable subsistence opportunity and ensuring the Copper River king salmon sustainable escapement goal is met.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F14-070)

PROPOSAL 35 - 5 AAC 01.647. Copper River Subsistence Salmon Fisheries Management Plans; and 5 AAC 77.591. Copper River Personal Use Dip Net Salmon Fishery Management Plan. Prohibit the use of monofilament mesh in dip net bag webbing in subsistence and personal use fisheries, as follows:

For the purpose of this section a dip net may not be constructed of monofilament material or any other single strand "gillnet" material commonly used in commercial fishing. Dip net mesh must be constructed of braided line or other material commonly used in sport fishing landing nets designed to minimize the harm done to the fish.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? King salmon are large fish that are prone to damage from handling. King salmon caught in dipnet fisheries in dip nets made of monofilament gillnet mesh are almost always badly tangled. Most king salmon tangled in gillnet mesh are drug up on the banks and allowed to flop around on the rocks or in the bottom of the boat until they can be untangled. By the time they are untangled they are often dead or mortally injured. The old braided mesh dip nets did not tangle fish nearly as bad as the now common gillnet mesh. King salmon in the Copper River Valley have declined and retention of king salmon in the personal use fishery has been restricted or eliminated over the last few years. The requirement to release most or all king salmon has caused the release of a high number of king salmon and the death of many valuable king salmon.

PROPOSED BY: Aaron Bloomquist (EF-C14-064)

PROPOSAL 36 - 5 AAC 01.647. Copper River Subsistence Salmon Fisheries Management Plans; and 5 AAC 77.591. Copper River Personal Use Dip Net Salmon Fishery Management Plan. In subsistence and personal use fisheries, prohibit removing a king salmon from the water if it is to be released, as follows:

A king salmon that is to be released may not be removed from the water prior to release.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? King salmon are large fish that are prone to damage from handling. King salmon caught in dipnet fisheries in dip nets are

almost always badly tangled. Most king salmon caught in dip nets that are intended for release are drug up on the banks and allowed to flop around on the rocks or in the bottom of the boat until they can be untangled. By the time they are untangled they are often dead or mortally injured. King salmon in the Copper River Valley have declined and retention of king salmon in the personal use fishery has been restricted or eliminated over the last few years. The requirement to release most or all king salmon has caused the release of a high number of king salmon and the death of many valuable king salmon.

PROPOSED BY: Aaron Bloomquist (EF-C14-065)

PROPOSAL 37 - 5 AAC 01.647. Copper River Subsistence Salmon Fisheries Management Plans; and 5 AAC 77.591. Copper River Personal Use Dip Net Salmon Fishery Management Plan. Require a department operated check station to monitor subsistence and personal use harvest and permit compliance in the Chitina and Glennallen subdistricts, as follows:

5 AAC 01.XXX A 24-hour checkpoint manned by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (department) to check fish wheel permits and personal use permits and harvest levels for sockeye and Chinooks.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Reinstate a 24-hour checkpoint at Chitna and five miles from Chitina at the five mile airport. The checkpoint would be manned by the department to check fishing permits and number of sockeyes and Chinooks harvested by fish wheel and dip net.

Enforcement does not have the man power or time to check to ensure that the 10-hour regulation of checking fish wheel in this area is being enforced or to determine if over harvest is occurring. Illegal harvest will continue if a check point is not installed and manned by the department. Fish wheels at the Chitina airport and downstream to Chitina-McCarthy Bridge are run 24-hours, day and night, throughout the fishing season. Harvest of personal use fisheries are not checked to determine if fish caught matches harvest regulations.

The participation and harvest levels in this fishery have significantly increased in recent years. A checkpoint and better in-season harvest monitoring is needed in order to responsibly manage this fishery.

The amount of harvest of sockeye and Chinook from fish wheels north of Chitina-McCarthy Bridge and personal use fisheries is questionable; check point is necessary to determined harvest levels for Chinook and sockeyes.

PROPOSED BY: Ahtna Tene Nene' Customary & Traditional Use Committee (HQ-F14-030)

PROPOSAL 38 - 5 AAC 77.591. Copper River Personal Use Dip Net Salmon Fishery Management Plan. Change the opening date for the Chitina Subdistrict personal use salmon fishery to open as early as June 1, but not later than June 11, as follows:

5AAC 77.591(b)

(b) Salmon may be taken from **June 1** [JUNE 7] through September 30. The commissioner shall establish a preseason schedule, including fishing times, for the period **June 1** [JUNE 7] through August 31 based on daily projected sonar counts at the sonar counter located near Miles Lake. This abundance-based preseason schedule will distribute the harvest throughout the season. The commissioner may close, by an emergency order effective **June 1** [JUNE 7], the Chitina Subdistrict personal use salmon fishing season and shall reopen the season, by emergency order, on or before **June 11** [JUNE 7], the Chitina Subdistrict personal use salmon fishing season and shall reopen the season, by emergency order, on or before **June 11** [JUNE 15] depending on the run strength and timing of the sockeye salmon run. Adjustments shall be made to the preseason schedule based on actual sonar counts compared to projected counts. If the actual sonar count at Miles Lake is more than the projected sonar count, the commissioner shall close, by emergency order, the season and immediately reopen it during which additional fishing times will be allowed. If the actual sonar count at Miles Lake is less than the projected sonar count, the commissioner shall close, by emergency order, the season and immediately reopen it during which fishing times will be reduced by a corresponding amount of time.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Re-establish the Chitina Personal Use Dip Net Fishery (CPUDF) opening date to earliest June 1 and the latest June 11. CPUDF fishing periods are determined based on a pre-season schedule established from projected sonar counts and from the actual run strength and timing of the sockeye run. At any time the commissioner may, by emergency order, shorten or lengthen fishing times in the CPUDF based on the actual sonar counts at the Miles Lake counter. During the December 2011 Prince William Sound/ Copper River Alaska Board of Fisheries meeting in Valdez, the board delayed the then CPUDF opening which opened June 1 and no later than June 11, to language saying the earliest opening would be June 7 and the latest June 15. This later opening was supposedly in response to getting more early fish to upriver subsistence users. Keep in mind that between 2003 and 2012 out of the average yearly total during that period of 1,549,548 sockeye and king salmon harvested by all users (commercial, personal use, subsistence and sport) the CPUDF average annual harvest during that period was 115,210 sockeye and king salmon or 7% of the total harvest of all users. During that same period the average annual commercial harvest of sockeye and king salmon was 1,304,272 or 84% of the 1,549,548 total. If more fish are needed in the upriver subsistence fishery, the board should be looking to the 84% for their relief. Reducing, by regulation, the ability of the CPUDF dipnetters to fish by 7 days only shortens the time available to them to harvest salmon to feed their families. If the sonar counts are poor the

commissioner would still have the authority to delay the CPUDF opening until June 11, but if the sonar counts are good then dipnetters should be allowed to fish on June 1 as they have in the past.

PROPOSED BY: Chitina Dipnetters Association & Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee (EF-C14-149)

PROPOSAL 39 - 5 AAC 77.591. Copper River Personal Use Dip Net Salmon Fishery Management Plan. Change the Chitina Subdistrict personal use annual limit to be based on household size, as follows:

Change the Chitina Personal Use Dip Net Fishery (CPUDF) annual bag limit to match the Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Dip Net Fishery annual bag limit (25 salmon for a permit holder and 10 salmon for each additional household member).

5 AAC 77.591 (e) would read “The annual limit for a personal use salmon fishing permit is **25 salmon for a permit holder and 10 salmon for each additional household member** [15 SALMON FOR A HOUSEHOLD OF ONE PERSON AND 30 SALMON FOR A HOUSEHOLD OF TWO OR MORE PERSONS] of which no more than one may be a king salmon.[the language addressing supplemental periods would be deleted].

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The issue we would like the Board to address is the inadequate bag limit for the CPUDF.

The current bag limit for the CPUDF is set at 15 salmon for a household of one and 30 salmon for a household of two or more. For a family of two this equates to 15 salmon per household member. For a family of six or more, however, it means five or less salmon for each member. And that’s for the entire year. That is far too little salmon for our larger families and the current bag limit does not consider how many members are in a household.

5AAC 77.591 (e) also calls for supplemental periods in the CPUDF and the taking of 10 extra salmon. These supplemental periods are problematic. They are only one week long and the timing of the periods often do not match the actual arrival of the surge of salmon into the dip net fishery and they create extra work for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, (ie. data assessment, emergency orders, media notification). For a Fairbanks permit holder who has previously filled his bag limit, it is not worth the approx. 675 mile round trip to participate in a supplemental period for only 10 extra salmon.

The Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery has an annual bag limit of 25 salmon for a permit holder and 10 salmon for each additional household member. This is a far more equitable bag limit. We would like the Chitina Personal Use Dip Net Fishery to have the same annual bag limit as this fishery. This would standardize the bag limits for both Personal Use Dip Net fisheries and if passed by the board, supplemental periods could be eliminated.

Chitina personal use dipnetters harvest salmon to feed their families, not to make money and not for sport.

PROPOSED BY: Chitina Dipnetters Association & Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee (EF-C14-147)

PROPOSAL 40 - 5 AAC 77.XXX. New Section. Require charter operators that transport personal use fishermen keep a daily logbook, as follows:

A vessel for hire will keep a daily logbook indicating number of customers, where and by what method fish were caught, and the number by specie.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Require any vessel that commercially transports personal use fisherman to keep a daily logbook. The board and department have always stressed the need to quantify trends in our fisheries. The use of "water taxis" has increased over the last decade and there is a lack of information on how it has affected the fishery. Does it displace participants whom do not hire? Does the newer act of trawling with a dipnet from a hired vessel increase efficiency from shore based methods? A logbook system would answer these questions and more from these commercial operations.

PROPOSED BY: Shawn Gilman (EF-C14-049)

PROPOSAL 41 - 5 AAC 77.591. Copper River Personal Use Dip Net Salmon Fishery Management Plan. Repeal reduction of the Chitina Subdistrict personal use allocation if the commercial salmon fishery is closed for 13 or more consecutive days, as follows:

5 AAC 77.591 (f)

.....

(f) The maximum harvest level for the Chitina Subdistrict Personal Use Salmon Fishery is 100,000 - 150,000 salmon, not including any salmon in excess of the in-river goal or salmon taken after August 31. [IF THE COPPER RIVER DISTRICT COMMERCIAL SALMON FISHERY IS CLOSED FOR 13 OR MORE CONSECUTIVE DAYS, THE MAXIMUM HARVEST LEVEL IN THE CHITINA SUBDISTRICT IS REDUCED TO 50,000 SALMON.]

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Repeal the language in 5AAC 77.591 (f) "If the Copper River District commercial salmon fishery is closed for 13 or more consecutive days, the maximum harvest level in the Chitina Subdistrict is reduced to 50,000 salmon for the remainder of the season."

The Chitina Dipnetters Association. has in the past proposed that the above language be deleted. The Chitina Personal Use Dip Net Salmon Fishery (CPUDF) has fishing periods determined by a pre-season schedule established by the commissioner using projected daily counts of salmon passing the Miles Lake sonar counter. This schedule is meant to distribute the harvest

throughout the season. Adjustments shall be made to the preseason schedule based on actual sonar counts compared to projected counts. If the actual sonar count at Miles Lake is more than the projected sonar count, the commissioner shall close, by emergency order, the season and immediately reopen it during which additional fishing times will be allowed. If the actual sonar count at Miles Lake is less than the projected sonar count, the commissioner shall close, by emergency order, the season and immediately reopen it during which fishing times will be reduced by a corresponding amount of time.

As stated above, if the salmon run numbers are low triggering closures in the commercial fishery, this will also be reflected in the salmon sonar counts at Miles Lake and the commissioner will also by emergency order, close or reduce dipnet openings.

The CPUDF has an allocation of 100,000–150,000 salmon. There is no justification to reduce the dipnet fishery allocation to 50,000 because of commercial fishery closures especially when the reduction would be for the rest of the dipnet season even though salmon numbers may within a week or so rebound.

PROPOSED BY: Chitina Dipnetters Association and Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee (EF-C14-148)

PROPOSAL 42 - 5 AAC 77.591. Copper River Personal Use Dip Net Salmon Fishery Management Plan. Change the maximum harvest level for the Chitina Subdistrict personal use fishery to 100,000 salmon, as follows:

5 AAC 77.591 (f), “the maximum harvest level for the Chitina Subdistrict Personal Use Fisheries should be changed from 100,000–150,000 to a maximum of 100,000, not including any salmon in excess of the in-river goal or salmon taken after August 31. Keep the rest of 5 AAC 77.791 (f) as written in regulation.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The maximum harvest level for the Chitina Subdistrict Personal Use Fisheries should be changed from 100,000–150,000 to a maximum level to 100,000, not including any salmon in excess of in-river goal or salmon taken after August 31. Keep the rest of the regulation in 5 AAC 77.591 (f) as is.

The number of participation in the Copper River Personal Use Fisheries has increased over the years to approximately 10,000+, who fish for salmon in the Chitna Subdistrict. Copper River salmon cannot sustain impacts from the continuation of over harvesting by personal use fisheries. As more participation increases in the Copper River Personal Use Fisheries, more sockeyes will be harvested by personal use fisheries; population of sockeyes will decrease over a period of time and will create a conservation concern.

A week after the opening date of personal use fisheries, the run strength of Copper River sockeyes slows down considerably for some of the upriver subsistence use fisheries. This may or may not be due to the Copper River sockeyes run strength or timing. It could be that personal

use fisheries is intercepting and harvesting most of the sockeyes. Some of the upriver subsistence fisheries have observed that harvest levels for sockeyes slackens noticeably after personal use fisheries opens for the fishing season.

PROPOSED BY: Ahtna Tene Nene' Customary & Traditional Use Committee (HQ-F14-029)

PROPOSAL 43 - 5 AAC 77.591. Copper River Personal Use Dip Net Salmon Fishery Management Plan. Establish an allocation of 3,000 king salmon to the Chitina Subdistrict personal use fishery, as follows:

5AAC 77.591(f) would read:

The maximum harvest level for the Chitina Subdistrict personal use salmon fishery is 100,000–150,000 salmon, **which includes an allocation of 3,000 king salmon**, not including any salmon in excess of the inriver goal or salmon taken after August 31.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Allocate 3,000 king salmon to the Chitina Personal Use Dip Net Fishery (CPUDF).

The CPUDF has a per permit season bag limit of 1 king salmon. Since 2009, retention of king salmon in the CPUDF has been severely restricted. From 2009–2013, because of these restrictions, the average annual harvest of king salmon in the CPUDF has been 663 fish. During that same period the average annual commercial king harvest was 12,415, for the Copper River District and Glennallen District subsistence fisheries combined it was 3,014, and for sport fisheries of the Copper River (no data yet for 2013) from 2009–2012 the annual average harvest is 1,494. Of these different fisheries, closing the CPUDF to the retention of the 1 king salmon bag limit has the least effect on increasing the escapement of king salmon to their spawning grounds.

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game relies on in-river king salmon data provided by the Eyak run mark/recapture fish wheels. Using this data in 2013, the commissioner closed king salmon retention in the CPUDF after the first 2 weeks of the dipnetting season even though final escapement numbers show final 2013 king salmon spawning escapement was 5,000 kings above the minimum.

The CPUDF is an Alaska resident only fishery. Residents use this fishery to bring home an annual supply of salmon for their families much the same as in a subsistence fishery. In 1999, the Board of Fisheries reduced the CPUDF king bag limit from 3 to 1. The 1 king bag limit was based on an entire season harvest of 3,000 king salmon. From 2000–2008 when Chitina dipnetters were allowed to harvest their 1 king unrestricted, the annual harvest ranged between 2,000–3,000. We are asking the Board to allocate 3,000 king salmon to the CPUDF so dipnetters

can harvest their 1 king unrestricted during that period when kings are passing through the dip net fishery, which usually lasts till July 15, approx. halfway through the dipnet season.

PROPOSED BY: Chitina Dipnetters Association & Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee (EF-C14-150)

PROPOSAL 44 - 5 AAC 24.310. Fishing seasons. Prohibit commercial salmon fishing until a salmon is recorded at the Copper River sonar, as follows:

Amend 5 AAC 24.310(a) to add "...the first commercial salmon opening of any year may only be announced after the department has verified by sonar that a salmon has escaped into the river."

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Kings in the Copper River have been the subject of numerous harvest restrictions and prohibitions in recent years. Escapement goals (even lowered goals) have not been consistently met. Genetic studies have identified three runs of kings. The upper river stocks enter the mouth in May, and these stocks have been subject to the most restrictions including complete restrictions on harvest in the Gulkana River, and significantly restricted harvests in the Chitina fishery. While the commercial fleet has recently been fishing outside the barrier islands more than regulations require, they are still harvesting thousands of kings from this imperiled upriver stock. When runs were healthy, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game always announced the first mid-May opener several days or weeks in advance, historically declaring a 12-hour opening inside the barrier islands. While advance notice is helpful for the fishers and processors to plan, it can be devastating to the early kings, especially when there is a late spring and the Copper River is full of ice and low water, preventing the kings from entering the river and causing them to mill longer in the mouth, where they are easily harvested by getting rolled up in loose hanging mesh dragging along the bottom of the river channels, or outside the islands in the same loosely hung mesh. If the sonar is not deployed by May 17 it is because the river is full of ice and the fish are not there anyway.

With the decimated king runs in the upper Copper River, especially the Gulkana, it is biologically indefensible to allow such a high rate of exploitation on these early returning fish by having commercial opener(s) before even a single fish has been counted inriver.

PROPOSED BY: Fairbanks Advisory Committee (EF-C14-155)

PROPOSAL 45 - 5 AAC 24.361. Copper River King Salmon Management Plan. Repeal mandatory inside-waters closure in Copper River King Salmon Management Plan, as follows:

Repeal mandatory inside commercial closures for any statistical week from regulation.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Mandatory inside closures.

The use of mandatory closures has always been unnecessary as Alaska Department of Fish and Game has the authority and shown the ability to manage the fisheries. Alaska Department of Fish and Game also opposes mandatory closures on sport fisheries because they have to be instituted even if the circumstances of the year and run strength do not require them. I am not suggesting getting rid of inside closures as a tool if conditions warrant, just ridding the mandatory language from statute.

PROPOSED BY: Shawn Gilman (EF-C14-050)

PROPOSAL 46 - 5 AAC 24.3XX. New Section. Restrict retention of commercially caught king salmon for a person’s own use to not exceed the king salmon sport bag limit in area caught, as follows:

The regulation requiring "home pack" to be recorded, should specify that home packed king salmon may only be retained by a single commercial license holder present on the vessel and that the number of kings harvested, but not sold, may not exceed the applicable sport harvest limits for the area fished.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The current regulation allows a commercial fisher, and presumably any crew member, to harvest an unrestricted number of king salmon for personal consumption without a subsistence permit, personal use permit, or even a sport fishing license. This unlimited consumptive use of a fully allocated fishery needs to be addressed seriously by the board. Someone should publicly justify why an individual person (Alaskan or not) should be allowed by law to kill and keep threatened kings for personal consumption or to give away to friends, neighbors, relatives or others. Yes, though these fish would likely be harvested anyway, they should all be sold as envisioned by the concept of commercial fishing. No other Alaskan, and especially no other person by virtue of their occupation, gets to keep as many kings as they want for their personal consumptive use. There are significant opportunities for these persons to harvest kings in sport and even subsistence fisheries with their commercial gill nets. If the home pack of kings is still justified despite the fact that many thousands of Alaskans have been, in recent years, completely denied the opportunity to harvest even a single king to eat from the Copper River, or have been limited to a single king, this harvest should be limited based on the applicable local sport fishing bag and possession limits.

PROPOSED BY: Fairbanks Advisory Committee (EF-C14-158)

PROPOSAL 47 - 5 AAC 24.361. Copper River King Salmon Management Plan. Allows use of dip nets for commercial salmon fishing during emergency order closures of the commercial drift gillnet fishery, as follows:

During times when the commissioner determines that it is necessary for the conservation of king salmon, the commissioner may, by emergency order, close the commercial gillnet fishing season

and immediately reopen a fishing season during which dip net gear may be used and all king salmon caught in a dip net must be returned immediately to the water.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Conservation of king salmon and harvest of abundant sockeye salmon within the inside closure of the Copper River district described in 5 AAC 24.350(1)(B).

PROPOSED BY: Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee (EF-C14-146)

PROPOSAL 48 - 5 AAC 24.XXX New Section. Mark district boundaries, as follows:

Re-establish the installation and maintenance of markers for the commercial fishing boundaries on the Copper River Flats during the commercial fishing season.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? There are no regulatory markers for the commercial fishing boundaries on the Copper River Flats. These boundaries are established by landmarks which are often obscured during periods of low visibility, forcing commercial fishers to rely on other, indirect, means of determining their position relative to these boundaries. These markers had been in place previously.

PROPOSED BY: Native Village of Eyak (EF-C14-129)

PROPOSAL 49 - 5 AAC 52.023. Special provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Upper Copper River and Upper Susitna River Area. Change the sport fishing season opening date for king salmon on the Klutina River from July 1 to June 1, as follows:

Extend the sport fishing season on the Klutina River waters to June 1 through August 10.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Klutina River in the Upper Copper River system has two runs of king salmon. The first run hits the Klutina River around June 1. The current season allows sport fishing of king salmon only from July 1 through August 10. This season deprives Alaskan sport fishermen any opportunity to catch a first run fish in June.

If nothing changes only the commercial fishing fleet will continue to be the only ones able to catch a first run king salmon bound for the Klutina River waters.

PROPOSED BY: Jim West (EF-C14-068)

PROPOSAL 50 - 5 AAC 52.022. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Upper Copper River and Upper Susitna River Area. Prohibit use of barbed hooks, multiple hooks, and bait when fishing for king salmon in the Upper Copper/Upper Susitna Area, as follows:

5 AAC 52.022 (a) (3) (D) only, unbaited, single, barbless hooks, artificial lures may be used

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Recreational anglers hook and release king salmon in the waters. King salmon are caught and released, which may cause harm to the king salmon. King salmon that are hooked and released will have permanent scars, and are damaged by barbed hooks.

Data for 2012 shows the number of fish caught and released for Gulkana River Drainages, which includes Upper Reach, Lower Reach, and unspecified was 565. Data for 2012 shows the number of fish caught and released for the Klutina River, Tonsina, Tazlina Upstream of Gulkana, Downstream of Klutina, and other waters was 1,410. Data does not specify what species were caught and released.

These numbers show how many days sport fisheries efforts were in some of the water bodies in Upper Copper / Upper Susitna Management Area (UCUSMA). In 2012, the average sport fishing effort (angler-days) in the UCUSMA by lakes and streams in the Gulkana River Drainage was 8,117, for the Upper Susitna Drainages for lakes and streams, the total angler days was 7,788 and for the Copper River Drainages, that includes Klutina the total angler days was 18,030, Tazlina angler days was 380, above Gulkana sport fishing effort was 894, below Klutina, total angler days was 628. Total number of angler days for these water bodies is 36,904 days of fishing effort.

With this many number of days of recreational anglers' effort to catch king salmon, sockeye or other species, the harm to king salmon being caught and released increases. As king salmon travel to spawning grounds, the mortality rate increases as more catch and release king salmon in water bodies occur.

A hook and release mortality in the Kenai River [for] Chinook Salmon Recreational Fishery Report, showed that "short term (1–5 day) hooking mortality for early run (125) and late run (120) Chinook, that were tagged using radio telemetry, was 8.8% and 5.9%; most mortality took place within 72-hours of release". The report also showed that "hooking location was a factor that significantly affected mortality, Chinook salmon hooked in the gills has a significantly reduced chance of surviving"..... Eight percent of the early run and five percent of the late run is a significant loss and shows that salmon that are hooked and released are harmed and perish as a result. The report also states that only a small amount of Chinooks were hooked in the gills, this still shows that harm is being done to Chinooks that are caught and released by fishermen.

Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) data indicates that 5,272 Chinooks were caught and released in the Upper Copper River in 2011. An eight percent mortality would indicate 422 king salmon were killed by catch and release in 2011. The entire sport fish harvest of Chinook

in 2012 was only 459. ADF&G data indicate that 1,410 Chinook were caught and released in 2012. An eight percent mortality rate would indicate 113 Chinooks were killed by catch and release mortality in 2012. The harvest in 2012 the fishery was restricted because of conservation concerns. The 422 catch and release mortality in 2011 was almost the entire harvest in 2012. Catch and release mortality at any level is unacceptable when there is a conservation concern.

PROPOSED BY: Ahtna Tene Nene' Customary & Traditional Use Committee (HQ-F14-027)

PROPOSAL 51 - 5 AAC 52.022. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Upper Copper River and Upper Susitna River Area. Prohibit use of barbed and multiple hooks for king salmon once an angler has taken a bag limit or annual limit of king salmon, as follows:

5 AAC 52.022(a)(x)General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Upper Copper River and Upper Susitna River Area
(a)

...

(15) If an angler has reached the daily or annual limit for King Salmon; only single barbless hooks may be used. All other methods remain the same as anglers that have not reached their limit.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Currently king salmon fishermen are allowed to continue fishing with the same gear after they have reached their daily limit and annual limit. Once these limits have been reached, their fishing becomes catch and release fishing by definition. All catch and release fisheries should require single barbless hooks to minimize the harm to king salmon.

PROPOSED BY: Aaron Bloomquist (EF-C14-067)

PROPOSAL 52 - 5 AAC 24.361. Copper River King Salmon Management Plan. Prohibit use of barbed and multiple hooks with or without bait if the sport fishery is restricted to catch-and-release, as follows:

5 AAC 24.361(c)(2)(C)(X) Copper River King Salmon Management Plan
(C) designate the fishery as a catch and release fishery only;
(x) if a catch and release fishery is designated; only single, barbless hooks may be used
(xx) if a catch and release fishery is designated; the use of bait may be retained or restricted

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The restrictions on sport fishing for king salmon in the Copper River Valley have been devastating to the very small communities that depend on this fishery for much of their annual income. The current

management plan does not allow for the use of bait when fisheries are restricted to catch and release only. This effectively completely closes the fisheries on the glacial tributaries of the Copper. The water in these tributaries is very cloudy (much more so than the Kenai) and eliminating bait in the fishery decreases hook ups by over 95%. These rivers are also very fast and not conducive to "back trolling". We would like the commissioner to have the option to allow the use of bait in catch and release fisheries. In addition, all catch and release fisheries should require barbless hooks to minimize the harm to king salmon.

PROPOSED BY: Aaron Bloomquist (EF-C14-066)

PROPOSAL 53 - 5 AAC 52.022. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession and size limits, and methods and means for the Upper Copper River and Upper Susitna River Area, and 5 AAC 52.023. Special provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Upper Copper River and Upper Susitna River Area. Clarify that a single-hook artificial lure is an artificial lure with one single-hook or one fly as follows:

5 AAC 52.022. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession and size limits, and methods and means for the Upper Copper River and Upper Susitna River Area. (a)

...

(1) in all flowing waters, only **one** unbaited, single-hook, artificial **lure** [LURES] may be used;

(2) in all lakes, except Crosswind Lake, Lake Louise, Paxson Lake, Summit Lake, Susitna Lake, and Tyone Lake, bait and artificial lures may be used; in Crosswind Lake, Lake Louise, Paxson Lake, Summit Lake, Susitna Lake, and Tyone Lake, a hook and bait may be used only as follows:

(A) from April 16–October 31, only **one** unbaited, single-hook, artificial **lure** [LURES] may be used;

(B) from November 1–April 15, only single-hooks may be used; bait may be used;

5 AAC 52.023. Special provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Upper Copper River and Upper Susitna River Area.

...

(9) in the Gulkana River drainage,

(A) from June 1–July 31, only **one** single-hook, artificial **fly** [FLIES], with a gap that does not exceed three-quarters inch between the point and shank, may be used in that portion of the Gulkana River downstream from the Richardson Highway Bridge to an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 500 yards downstream of the confluence with the Copper River; additional weight may only be used 18 inches or more ahead of the fly;

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Current regulations are unclear whether artificial lures with two single hooks or two artificial flies may be used when regulations state that only unbaited, single-hook, artificial lures may be used. Unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure regulations are in place to provide for sustained yield of rainbow trout, Arctic

grayling, Dolly Varden, lake trout, or king salmon. Prefacing the language by the word “one” clarifies that only one artificial lure with one hook or only one artificial fly may be used. This would provide consistency in area regulations within the Upper Copper River and Upper Susitna River area.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F14-071)

PROPOSAL 54 - 5 AAC 52.023. Special provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Upper Copper River and Upper Susitna River Area. Increase the Arctic grayling bag and possession limit in the Gulkana River drainage, as follows:

5 AAC 52.023 (h) Fishing seasons and periods. In the Gulkana River Drainage, under

5 AAC 52.023 (h), **10** [5] per day, **10** [5] in possession. Only **5** [1] 14 inches or longer may be possessed as a part of the daily bag limit and possession limit. Only baited single hook may be used.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Increase possession, bag limit and size of Arctic grayling harvest in the Gulkana River Drainage (5 AAC 52.023(h)) and allow baited, single hook.

Fuel costs to drive to fishing areas are expensive in the Copper River Basin communities. Fuel cost is more than \$4.00 per gallon. In some Copper River Basin communities, it is more costly and expensive for those who have low and seasonal incomes. Harvesting only five grayling per day with regulatory restrictions causes hardship and it is discouraging to be allowed to harvest only 5 per day.

Using baited, single hook, to harvest Arctic grayling is better than using un-baited, single hook. Arctic grayling are attracted to baited, single hook. Using bait is a lot better to fish with than unbaited, single hook and artificial lures. The success rate is higher when using bait to fish Arctic grayling.

If there is a decline in Arctic grayling populations, the department can take appropriate actions to limit size, possession and bag limit in the Gulkana River Drainages.

PROPOSED BY: Ahtna Tene Nene’ Customary & Traditional Use Committee (HQ-F14-028)

PROPOSAL 55 - 5 AAC 52.023. Special provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Upper Copper River and Upper Susitna River Area. Amend special provisions for rainbow trout in Tebay River drainage, as follows:

(23) In the Tebay River drainage,

(A) in Summit Lake **and Bridge Creek**, the bag and possession limit for rainbow/steelhead trout is 10 fish, of which only one may be greater than 18 inches in length;

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Bridge Creek is the outlet stream of Summit Lake (a remote, high alpine lake in Wrangell-St. Elias National Park) and the main spawning location for Summit Lake rainbow trout. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game conducted a large-scaled removal operation in 1999, 2004–2011, and 2013 to change this rainbow trout population from a stunted population with no fish larger than 16 inches to a stable population composed of multiple size classes ranging up to 24 inches or greater. To maintain the improved size structure of the rainbow trout population in Summit Lake, the Alaska Board of Fisheries adopted a 10-fish bag limit, of which only one may be greater than 18 inches in length, and removed the spawning closure for rainbow trout at the December 2011 meeting. Most of the sport fishing effort in this area occurs from the shore of Summit Lake near the outlet or within the first mile of Bridge Creek. Bridge Creek was not included in the 2011 regulations. This proposal would align the regulations in Bridge Creek and Summit Lake and provide the best management strategy to maintain the desired population structure.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F14-073)

PROPOSAL 56 - 5 AAC 52.023. Special provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Upper Copper River and Upper Susitna River Area. Update the Upper Copper/Upper Susitna Area stocked waters regulation, as follows:

(28) in stocked waters, the bag and possession limit for rainbow/steelhead trout, Arctic char/Dolly Varden, landlocked salmon, and Arctic grayling is 10 fish in combination, of which only one may be greater than 18 inches in length; for the purposes of this paragraph, "stocked waters" include Arizona Lake, Buffalo Lake, Connor Lake, Crater Lake, Dick Lake, DJ Lake, Gergie Lake, John Lake, Junction Lake, [KATHLEEN LAKE, LITTLE CRATER LAKE, LITTLE JUNCTION LAKE,] North Jans Lake, Old Road Lake, Peanut Lake, Pippin Lake, Round Lake, Ryan Lake, Sculpin Lake, Silver Lake, Strelna Lake, South Jans Lake, Squirrel Creek Pit Lake, Tex Smith Lake, Three Mile Lake, Tolsona Lake, Tolsona Mountain Lake, **and** Two Mile Lake [AND VAN LAKE];

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? In conjunction with each Alaska Board of Fisheries cycle, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game reviews stocked waters to ensure consistency between the *Statewide Stocking Plan for Recreational Fisheries*, the Upper Copper River and Upper Susitna River Area stocked waters regulations, and the Upper Copper River and Upper Susitna River Area Stocked Waters Management Plan (5 AAC 52.065). Stocked waters may be removed from the stocking plan, no longer stocked, and removed from corresponding regulations due to a loss of public access, poor fish growth or survival, or insufficient

fishing effort. As new waters are identified and included in the stocking plan they are added to the regulations.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F14-074)

PROPOSAL 57 - 5 AAC 52.023. Special provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Upper Copper River and Upper Susitna River Area. Amend methods and means for burbot in a portion of the Copper River drainage to reference statewide regulations, as follows:

(3) in the Copper River drainage, in that portion of the mainstem of the Copper River downstream from the confluence of the Copper River and the Slana River,

...

(B) [THE BAG AND POSSESSION LIMIT FOR BURBOT IS FIVE FISH]; burbot may be taken with more than one line and hook, **including a set line, as described in 5 AAC 75.033** [ONLY UNDER THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:

(i) WITH SPORT FISHING GEAR, AS DEFINED IN 5 AAC 75.020, ICE FISHING GEAR, AS DEFINED IN 5 AAC 75.021, OR A SET LINE, AS DEFINED IN 5 AAC 75.995;

(ii) THE AGGREGATE NUMBER OF HOOKS MAY NOT EXCEED FIVE HOOKS;

(iii) ONLY SINGLE HOOKS WITH A GAP BETWEEN THE POINT AND SHANK THAT IS LARGER THAN THREE-FOURTHS INCH MAY BE USED;

(iv) IF USING A SET LINE, EACH HOOK MUST BE SET TO REST ON THE BOTTOM, AND EACH LINE MUST BE IDENTIFIED WITH THE ANGLER'S NAME AND ADDRESS ON A TAG OR LABEL ATTACHED TO THE SHOREWARD END OF THE LINE OR ABOVE THE ICE, UNATTENDED SET LINES ARE PROHIBITED AND MUST BE PHYSICALLY INSPECTED AT LEAST ONCE EVERY 24 HRS];

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Current regulations for burbot set lines in a portion of the Copper River drainage mainstem are redundant with statewide regulations in 5 AAC 75.033. The proposed change would eliminate the duplication and simplify regulations.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F14-072)
