

From: United Southeast Alaska Gillnetters

To: Alaska Board of Fisheries, Juneau, AK

January 20, 2018

Dear Chairman Jensen and Board of Fisheries Members:

Preliminary data from 2017 shows a total Chilkat chinook run reconstruction of 1,325 (from RC 7, ADF&G Chinook origins memo, page 44):

- Escapement was 1,173.
- The total catch was 152. 98 for troll, 44 for sport and 10 for nets.
- That's an exploitation rate of 11.4%.
- Our fleet harvested less than 1% of the total run.

This is consistent with our fleets exploitation rate in 2016 as well. This is the most recent data.

The restrictions suggested in "option B" are far beyond those used last season.

The one-mile Boat Harbor THA was established by former area management biologist as a sockeye conservation measure. In the last 10 years, there has been ONE Chilkat king tag recovered in 115-11 at Boat Harbor THA, which has been traditionally two miles.

- 2017 Chinook origin CWT data indicates that approximately 800 of 1200 kings harvested in District 115 were enhanced fish of DIPAC origin.
- The modifications below would allow us a little more opportunity the first weeks of the season and are probably enough to reduce fleet size due to the draconian loss of area.

USAG would like to offer these modifications per bullet point to "*RC266's Chilkat and King Salmon rivers, Purse seine and drift gillnet fisheries, option B*" (bullet points quoted below with **suggested modifications underlined and in bold**):

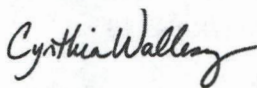
Specific Action to Implement the Objective:

- Using emergency order authority, reduce the open area in northern Chilkat Inlet during the first 5 weeks of the season by implementing and exceeding conservation measures of the *Lynn Canal and Chilkat River King Salmon Fishery Management Plan* by closing the area north of Eldred Rock Lighthouse. **No modification**
- Using emergency order authority, impose 6-inch maximum mesh restriction in first through third weeks of the season in Section 15-A (requires adoption of **Proposal 171**). **No modification**
- Using emergency order authority, close western half of Section 15-A in first through fifth week of the season in Section 15-A. **No modification**

- Using emergency order authority, impose night closures between 10:00 p.m. and 4:00 a.m. in first through fourth week of the season in Section 15-A and Section 15-C. **No modification**
- Using emergency order authority, impose 6-inch maximum mesh restriction in first and second weeks of the season in Section 15-C (requires adoption of **Proposal 171**). **No modification**
- Using emergency order authority, limit time and area open to 2 days/week in the “postage stamp” area only in first **week; and the second week for 2 days south of latitude of Vanderbilt Reef Light** and ~~second weeks~~ of the season in Section 15-C.
- Using emergency order authority, open ~~only~~ the inside area of Boat Harbor THA (west of marker) 7 days/week in first through fourth week of the season. **Open 2 days a week within 2 miles of the western shoreline for first and second weeks of the season.**
- ~~Using emergency order authority, open outside of Boat Harbor THA only 2 days/week within 1 mile of western shoreline for first and second weeks of the season.~~
- Using emergency order authority, impose 6-inch maximum mesh restriction in first and second week in outside area of Boat Harbor THA (requires adoption of **Proposal 171**). **No modification**
- Using emergency order authority, impose non-retention of king salmon over 28 inches in regional purse seine fisheries (requires adoption of **non-retention provisions attached**). **No comment**
- Using emergency order authority, reduce area open in Taku Inlet for the first 5 weeks of the District 11 drift gillnet fishery; close Taku Inlet north and west of a line from Point Greely to Cove Point for first week and north of Point Greely, Cooper Point or Jaw Point for second through fifth week of the season. **No modification**
- Using emergency order authority, do not open Section 11-C to drift gillnetting. **Add “prior to July 31”**
- Using emergency order authority, impose night closures between 10:00 p.m. and 4:00 a.m. in Subdistrict 111-31, and Section 11-C if open. **No modification**
- Using emergency order, impose 6-inch maximum mesh size restriction for the first 3 weeks of the District 11 drift gillnet fishery (requires adoption of **Proposal 171**). **No modification**

In 2017, there was no Chilkat king tags recovered during times of conservation measures. We feel the science supports our previous position. USAG supports proposal 171.

Thank you for your consideration,



Cynthia Wallesz, Executive Director