

PROPOSAL 122

5 AAC 21.365. Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan; and 5 AAC 21.330. Gear.

Create a commercial dip net fishery in the Kasilof River, as follows:

5 AAC 21.365 Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan

I don't know where exactly to place the new language...especially as this is a new fishery I can't even begin to give precise regulatory language.

When the commercial fishery is open to setnetting, a permitted commercial fisherman may fish the Kasilof River using up to (3) nets aboard his boat. Salmon shall not be marked as personal use fish, but rather recorded on regular fish tickets. Dip nets shall be subject to the descriptions found in general provisions 5 AAC 39.105 (24). Crewmembers shall be subject to license requirements of 5 AAC 39.109 and 5 AAC 39.110

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? 5 AAC 21.363 Upper Cook Inlet Management Plan

(B) The need to allocate the harvestable surplus within user groups;

(5) in the absence of a specific management plan, it is the intent of the board that salmon be harvested in the fisheries that have historically harvested them, according to the methods, means, times, and locations of those fisheries;

AND

5 AAC 21.365 Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan

(3) and (4)

I would consider this a 'right to work' proposal. Fish and Game management, by BOF directive and at the request of groups such as KPFA are willing to fish a select group of fishermen, prioritizing the leases they fish, while systematically excluding others.

While there is plenty of precedent both in the Northern District and now written into the king salmon management plan in which a fishing period could be fished with a restricted number of nets, I know that this has been and will continue to be strongly opposed. I myself am certainly not sold on the idea. Why should a particular individual be penalized when his/her business is actually productive? I do not think they should. Also, most of the fishermen with holdings in the 600 foot fishery have a level of seniority and command a level of respect.

But this is not all roses. In addition to maintaining a full gear complement, a good portion of their success is due to the fact that depending upon the regulation in play, a large number of fishermen further out on the ocean or up the beach are shut down.

Whatever rationalizations might be given to the relative catch strengths of Kasilof fish in different locations, it is absolutely true that they can be caught in abundance up and down the Inlet, and that this stock is the main or major component of the harvest of fishermen excluded from the harvest. I don't disagree that North K-Beach fishermen should be included amongst those who have historically harvested Kasilof River stock; however, by expanding upon the 600 foot fishery, fishermen and fishing sites from the quarter mile out continue to be systematically excluded from the set net fishery.

In years when we have faced overescapements, a fairly egalitarian fishery, at least in concept, has come into play in the form of the Kasilof Special Harvest Area. I can understand very well many of the fishermen's general dislike of the fishery... having to leave home. And the egalitarian notion is bashed up quite badly when the few fishermen who camp out at the boundary catch the lion share of the incoming fish. However, it is also likely that a lot of the bad opinion towards the KRSHA comes from those who really do not wish to compete or be exposed to an egalitarian fishery. They would prefer that regulation preserve the status quo. Whatever all the different opinion, regulations do state that it is the intent of the BOF that the KRSHA should rarely, if ever be opened under the management subsection in which it is written and this only for conservation reasons.

So where does that leave the situation? I do have a solution. It's not perfect. But I think that it improves upon the current situation.

I would propose for the implementation of a commercial dip net fishery in the Kasilof River whenever the Kasilof Section is open to commercial fishing. An individual holding a commercial set net permit could fish a complement of three nets in the areas open to dipnetting in the Kasilof River.

I am not sure how many permit holders/boats would choose to participate, but given the flow of the river, it really is a nice egalitarian sort of fishery. There are currently very few boats that fish the Kasilof dip net fishery. Nearly all of the PU effort is shore-bound, and so additional effort in the river channel will be for nearly uncontested fish. How often can you say that in the Cook Inlet! It is also timely that the ADFG has recommended lowering the BEG on the Kasilof. As it has been difficult in recent years to achieve that BEG, and as the KRSHA has not been a raving success, additional fishing effort in the form of this new fishery may well be warranted even from a conservation perspective, let alone the allocation issue which I maintain should be the primary focus of the Board.

PROPOSED BY: Nathan Hoff

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