

Copper River Subsistence(7 proposals)

PROPOSAL 44

5 AAC 01.620. Lawful gear and gear specifications.

Allow more than the legal limit of gillnet gear to be onboard a vessel used in the subsistence salmon fishery, as follows:

(j)

(4) A vessel engaged in subsistence gillnet may have extra gillnet gear on board the vessel.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Interpretation that any vessel legally engaged in subsistence fishing cannot have extra gear on board to promote efficiency of harvest if the legal amount of gear being used is damaged during the subsistence activity . Being able to continue harvest having a spare amount on board does not harm anyone and is acknowledged by Subsistence regulations. further codifying this will more clearly define any misunderstanding by the public and ADFG to alleviate confusion and stress for subsistence participants.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. Coordination with other subsistence users.

PROPOSED BY: Shawn Gilman

(EF-F24-027)

PROPOSAL 45

5 AAC 01.625. Waters closed to subsistence fishing.

Allow subsistence fishing for salmon in the Copper River inside closure area, as follows:

We recommend opening inside closure waters to subsistence fishing by adding new subsection 5 AAC 01.648 (c):

5 AAC 01.648(c). Prince William Sound Subsistence Salmon Fisheries Management Plans

(c) Salmon may be taken for subsistence purposes in the inside closure area described in 5 AAC 24.350(1)(B) unless all other Copper River Chinook fisheries have first been restricted.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The regulations set forth in 5 AAC 24.361 that restrict fishing in the regulatory closed waters specified in 5 AAC 24.350(1) (B) for the conservation of king salmon should only be applied to Commercial and Sport fisheries (5AAC 24.361 (b)-(c)). This area restriction has been applied to the subsistence fishery. Because the subsistence fishery is catch-limited (5 king salmon per household limit), an area restriction provides no conservation benefit; however, it places an unnecessary burden on subsistence users to fish farther out, especially those in river skiffs coming down rivers who are more suited to fishing more protected waters.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. This proposal was developed by the Native Village of Eyak

Department of the Environment and Natural Resources staff, recommended by the Native Village of Eyak's Natural Resource Advisory Council and approved unanimously by Tribal Council.

PROPOSED BY: Native Village of Eyak (HQ-F24-099)

PROPOSAL 46

5 AAC 01.630. Subsistence fishing permits.

Require harvest reporting within seven days of harvest in the lower Copper River district subsistence salmon fishery, as follows:

5 AAC 01.6xx new section

Subsistence harvest from the Copper River district must be reported within 7 days of harvest.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Subsistence fishing in the lower Copper River District, which occurs at the mouth of the Copper River, can provide valuable in season run strength information as it is open every Saturday and on Mondays and Thursdays when the commercial fishery is closed. However, the reporting requirements for subsistence permits do not require reporting harvest until October 31. We believe that weekly reporting will not place an undue burden on participants in this fishery as it can be easily done at the local ADF&G office in Cordova, where all subsistence trips for the lower copper are based out of, or online. Additionally weekly reporting will increase the accuracy of reports and reduce the likelihood of participants harvesting more fish than their bag limit.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. This Proposal was discussed and submitted by the Copper River/Prince William Sound AC

PROPOSED BY: Copper River/PWS Advisory Committee (HQ-F24-069)

PROPOSAL 47

5 AAC 01.630. Subsistence fishing permits and 5 AAC 77.5XX Personal use fishing permits.

Require inseason reporting in subsistence and personal use fisheries, as follows:

(6) subsistence fishing reports must be completed on forms provided by the department, **or using an online app or phone call** and submitted to the department office from which the permit was issued [at a time specified by the department] **within 5 days of harvest** for each particular area and fishery.

(6) personal use fishing permits must be completed on forms provided by the department, **or using an online app or phone call** and submitted to the department office from which the permit was issued [at a time specified by the department] **within 5 days of harvest** for each particular area and fishery.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Require In-Season reporting of Subsistence and Personal Use Salmon within 5 days of harvest using an online app or phone call to the department.

Currently, participants in both fisheries are not required to report their harvest until well after the close of the season. Both fisheries take a substantial number of salmon, especially in low abundance runs. It is imperative that managers have real time data to use their EO authority to close fisheries when the security of the resource demands it. It is time for all users of these valuable resources to be accountable.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. This Proposal was discussed and developed by the Copper River/Prince William Sound Advisory Committee.

PROPOSED BY: Copper River/PWS Advisory Committee (HQ-F24-034)

PROPOSAL 48

5 AAC 01.620. Lawful gear and gear specifications.

Repeal the prohibition of subsistence guide services in the Glennallen Subdistrict, as follows:

Remove prohibition on subsistence guide services in the Glennallen subdistrict. Allow for subsistence guide services in the Glenallen subdistrict notwithstanding the prohibition

5 AAC 01.620 Lawful gear and gear specifications

[(L) SUBSISTENCE FISHING GUIDE SERVICES ARE PROHIBITED IN THE GLENNALLEN SUBDISTRICT. FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS SUBSECTION,

(1) "SUBSISTENCE FISHING GUIDE SERVICES" MEANS ASSISTANCE, FOR COMPENSATION OR WITH THE INTENT TO RECEIVE COMPENSATION, TO A SUBSISTENCE FISHERMAN TO TAKE OR TO ATTEMPT TO TAKE FISH FROM A VESSEL BY ACCOMPANYING OR PHYSICALLY DIRECTING THE SUBSISTENCE FISHERMAN IN SUBSISTENCE FISHING ACTIVITIES DURING ANY PART OF A SUBSISTENCE FISHING TRIP;

(2) "COMPENSATION" MEANS DIRECT OR INDIRECT PAYMENT, REMUNERATION, AND OTHER BENEFITS RECEIVED IN RETURN FOR SERVICES, REGARDLESS OF THE SOURCE; IN THIS PARAGRAPH, "BENEFITS"

(A) INCLUDES

(I) WAGES AND OTHER EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS GIVEN DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY TO AN INDIVIDUAL OR ORGANIZATION; AND

(II) DUES, PAYMENTS, FEES, AND OTHER REMUNERATION GIVEN DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY TO A FISHING CLUB, BUSINESS, ORGANIZATION, OR INDIVIDUAL WHO PROVIDES SUBSISTENCE FISHING GUIDE SERVICES;

(B) DOES NOT INCLUDE REIMBURSEMENT FOR THE ACTUAL DAILY EXPENSES FOR FUEL, FOOD, OR BAIT.]

In order to assess the significance of guide service use, consideration should also be given to updating the Glennallen Subdistrict Subsistence Permit Harvest ticket to provide a check box on the permit to indicate if commercial services were used.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? A prohibition against subsistence guide services in the Glennallen Subdistrict was adopted at 2021 at the Prince William Sound/Upper Copper River Board of Fisheries meeting. This new regulation has unfairly and unnecessarily reduced opportunities for Alaskans and non-rural natives to harvest salmon for food in the Glennallen Subdistrict subsistence fishery. The prohibition has decreased opportunity for Alaskan households and increased competition for the extremely limited number of shore-based fishing sites that can be accessed via the public right of way.

The most reasonable access to this fishery for many subsistence users is by boat, but without an available transport or guide service, many subsistence users may find it very dangerous or are simply unable to participate and meet their subsistence needs. Many households rely on guides and transporters because the number of safe shore-based fishing sites is very limited; they are unwilling to attempt to wade into the dangerous river; they do not own a boat or are not comfortable driving a boat on the Copper River; they do not own, or are unable to afford build, maintain or operate a fishwheel; they do not know someone with a fishwheel to use; or they do not have access to shoreline to place a fishwheel.

The prohibition was aimed at commercial services but it is subsistence users that have been harmed. Guide services merely provide a safe and cost-effective means of accessing fish for personal and family consumption. Significant use of these services in this subsistence fishery very clearly demonstrates their utility and value.

There is no sustainability issue with allowing subsistence users access to salmon resources with the assistance of a guide service. The prohibition was allocative away from the subsistence fishery.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. This proposal was developed collaboratively by a group of Glennallen subsistence fishery participants.

PROPOSED BY: Marlene Bertie Irneraucin (HQ-F24-054)

PROPOSAL 49

5 AAC 01.620. Lawful Gear and Gear Specifications.

Prohibit transport services in the Glennallen Subdistrict, as follows:

5 AAC 01.620(1)(1)

(1) Subsistence fishing guide services are prohibited in the Glennallen Subdistrict. For the purposes of this subsection,

(1) "subsistence fishing guide services" means assistance, for compensation or with the intent to receive compensation, to a subsistence fisherman to take or to attempt to take fish from a vessel

by accompanying or physically **transporting** [DIRECTING] the subsistence fisherman in subsistence fishing activities during any part of a subsistence fishing trip

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? We want to clarify language to include the restriction of “transporting” subsistence fishermen in the Glennallen Subdistrict for subsistence fishing. Monetary compensation for transporting service should not exist in a subsistence fishery.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. No

PROPOSED BY: Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission (HQ-F24-108)

PROPOSAL 50

5 AAC 1.620. Lawful gear and gear specifications. and 5 AAC 77.591. Copper River Personal Use Dip Net Salmon Fishery Management Plan.

Prohibit the use of chartplotters or fish finders in the Chitina and Glennallen Subdistricts, as follows:

5AAC 52.022 (a)(XX) Electronics including chart-plotters, depth finders, fish finders, or any other device that may aid in locating fish, depth, or paths of travel while fishing may not be used to aid in the taking of fish from a boat in the Chitina and Glennallen Subdistricts.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? “Fair chase” is an important concept that applies to hunting regulations. Many activities such as the use of drones, electronic calls, and even two-way radios are not allowed.

Electronics to aid in the taking of fish should be viewed in the same way.

We have seen increased fishing pressure when other places around the state such as the Kenai and the Yukon are closed. We are likely to see further increase as the Yukon has been closed for half a decade and the Kenai will see closures as well. Participation is only going to grow on the Copper River in years to come. The Copper River can’t feed the whole State.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. No.

PROPOSED BY: Kirk Wilson (HQ-F24-109)
