

**PROPOSAL 136 – 5 AAC 21.310. Fishing Seasons.** Allow commercial fishing with set gillnets in the North Kalifonsky Beach (NKB), statistical area 244-32, within 660 feet of shore with shallow nets only, when the Kasilof Section is open, on or after July 8, as follows:

NKB, MAY have the opportunity to harvest with SELECT gear, ( 4 3/4 in maximum mesh size and can't be more than 29 meshes deep ), from July 8 on, when any portion of the Kasilof section is fishing. The set nets fished on NKB, cannot fish farther than 600 ft from the mean high tide mark.

Fishing within 600 ft, from mean high tide, using SELECT gear, with 29 mesh deep nets would make the king salmon harvest minimal. Additionally using, 4 3/4 in mesh or smaller, would be very efficient in harvesting Kasilof sockeye that are abundant on the beach, and those smaller size fish that make up 61% of the Kasilof River escapement. It is these two ocean and younger age classes that continually drive the Kasilof River over the top end of its BEG.

By fishing NKB, with SELECT gear, should cut down on the amount of time fished in the KRSHA.

The regulation would read something like this:

From July 8 on, when any portion of the Kasilof section is fishing; North Kalifonsky Beach, stat area 244-32, MAY open with set gill nets, restricted to fishing within 600 ft from the mean high tide mark. Nets cannot be more than 29 meshes deep and the mesh size cannot exceed 4 3/4 in.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** The issue here is lack of traditional and historic harvest of Kasilof sockeye on North Kalifonsky Beach (NKB), statistical area 244-32.

NKB since before Statehood was a traditional and historic harvester of Kasilof sockeye. With management changes that went into place in 1999, the opportunity to harvest Kasilof stocks were greatly diminished for NKB.

ADF&G staff has stated that Kasilof sockeye are predominately "beach orientated". The ESSN fishery catches 58% of the Kasilof harvest, while the Drift fleet harvests 27%.

A 2009 report from ADF&G- *Genetic Stock Identification of Upper Cook Inlet Sockeye Salmon Harvest*, showed that the harvest of Kenai and Kasilof sockeye on all NKB was close to a 50/50 split between the two stocks, ( page 52). This study was taken from samples of the entire NKB section. If samples were taken only from nets fishing 600 ft of mean high tide, Kasilof sockeye that are predominately " beach orientated", the Kasilof sockeye proportion would be undoubtedly higher.

From 1979 to 1999, the Kasilof River exceeded its BEG 12 out of 21 years, ( 57% of the time). During some of this time period the Kasilof River escapement goal was considerable less, 75,000 to 150,000 sockeye. During this time NKB was a traditional and historic harvester of Kasilof sockeye.

From 1999 the Kasilof River sockeye salmon escapement has exceeded its BEG, 15 out of the last 17 years, ( 88% of the time).

ADF&G harvest data, shows from 2008-2015, in the Kasilof section setnet fishery, two ocean and younger sockeye age classes (smaller fish) comprise 33% of the harvest.

ADF&G sockeye escapement data from 2008-2015, in the Kasilof River showed 61% of the sockeye escapement was made up of two ocean and younger age class sockeye.

In the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area (KRSHA), some years data, showed 73% of the harvest comprised of two ocean and younger age classes.

At BOF meetings since 2002, 2005, 2008, 2011, 2014, setnetters on NKB have been trying to get back fishing times on Kasilof stocks, that were a traditional and historic mainstay in out fishery for decades.

Kenai River sockeye salmon are the main stock harvested in the East - Forelands section ( which is a minimum 10 miles north of the Kenai River). Kenai River sockeye are harvested all the way to the Northern District. Common sense and genetic reports show that Kasilof sockeye are abundant on NKB, which is from 4 to 8 miles north of the Kasilof River.

**PROPOSED BY:** Gary L. Hollier

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