

**PROPOSAL 225 - 5 AAC 60.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Knik Arm Drainages Area.** Reduce the bag limits for salmon, other than king salmon, and prohibit releasing coho salmon, as follows:

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(2) salmon, other than king salmon,

(A) 16 inches or greater in length may be taken from January 1 - December 31; bag and possession limit is **two** [THREE] fish, of which no more than **one** [TWO] per day and one [TWO] in possession may be coho salmon; if retention of coho salmon is allowed under this chapter, **all coho salmon must be retained and there will be no catch and release fishing for coho salmon;** [A COHO SALMON 16 INCHES OR GREATER IN LENGTH THAT IS REMOVED FROM THE WATER MUST BE RETAINED AND BECOMES PART OF THE BAG LIMIT OF THE PERSON ORIGINALLY HOOKING IT; A PERSON MAY NOT

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** The Little Susitna coho salmon escapement of 10,100 to 17,700 has exceeded the goal in 14 of 25 years by an average of 14,000 coho and only achieved the goal in 7 years. This system can not be managed with restrictions in the commercial fishery to pour more and more coho into this stream to achieve the escapement goal. It is obvious that the commercial restrictions are unnecessary and unwarranted in well over half of the years wasting hundreds of thousands of coho as well as sockeye, pink and chum salmon. In only 5 of 25 years of data was the goal not achieved, missing the lower end by an average of only 3,300 coho. This system is basically unmanaged and this needs to change. By reducing the bag limit back to one until the run is assessed and then liberalizing the goal to two or three coho and allowing for a more liberal harvest in the commercial fisheries all stocks will benefit without undue hardships being applied to any one group. Since the catch and release mortality is 70 percent catch and release should be illegal as it is really wanton waste. When you consider the fact that the Little Susitna is an index of other coho stocks, most with much less of an inriver exploitation the amount of overescapement, lost harvest and reduced production is staggering. A companion proposal has been submitted under commercial regulations.

**PROPOSED BY:** Earl Young

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