

PROPOSAL 6 - 5 AAC 56.122. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area. Extend the fishing season for Anchor River, Deep Creek, Ninilchik River, and Stariski Creek from October 31 through November 30, as follows:

Amend 5 AAC 56.122(a)(2), (5), (6), and (10) to change the season closing date for Anchor River, Deep Creek, Ninilchik River and Stariski Creek from October 31 to November 30.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Provide more opportunity for steelhead fishing on Anchor River, Deep Creek, Ninilchik River and Stariski Creek. Fishing pressure is very light by late October. Although these waters often freeze up by early November,

they sometimes remain unfrozen into December. Until a few years ago, the season had remained open until December 31. Then, as I recall, ADF&G became concerned about late season mortality in these catch-and-release fisheries and recommended the closing date be October 31, which the Board adopted. However, the biological justification for doing so seemed weak at the time. In recent years, the steelhead have been running late, and no harm would occur from a slightly longer season. I was on the steelhead planning team for ADF&G in the 1990's which recommended catch-and-release for the steelhead fisheries on these streams and wild stock management, which the Board adopted. At that time the closing date was never an issue. I would like to see the Board review the science to either justify the current closing date or revise it to November 30, in light of the fact that the pressure is very light by the latter part of October and in some years the fish have seemed to be running late.

PROPOSED BY: Jeff Parker

(EF-F16-134)

PROPOSAL 7 - 5 AAC 56.122. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area. Extend the fishing season on Anchor River, Deep Creek, Ninilchik River, Stariski Creek through November 15, as follows:

All season ending dates related to the Anchor River, Deep Creek, Ninilchik River, Stariski Creek changed from October 31st to November 15th as the last day you can fish. Example under Deep Creek Drainage currently states "Closed to all fishing from November 1st-May 15th" change to November 16th-May 15th"

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Extend the fishing season on the Anchor River, Deep Creek, Ninilchik River, and Stariski Creek for other species other than salmon from a closing date of November 1st to November 15th. Basically extend the season 2 weeks. The primary species targeted during this time frame are Steelhead and Dolly Varden. Historically the season had been open thru November 30th. The last Board cycle changed the season to the current regulation closing these rivers to all fishing on October 31st. The reasoning behind the change was to reduce pressure and stress on Steelhead during what is thought to be low water conditions and extremely cold temperatures during the month of November.

To my knowledge there hasn't been any biological studies on the Lower Kenai Peninsula streams related to Steelhead catch and release mortality and water temperatures to support this regulation. The fishery is already heavily restricted single hook, no bait and 100% catch and release in addition to non removal of fish out of the water. In addition anglers participating in the fishery are very self-policing and some of the most ethical anglers you will see on Alaska waterways. Whether its global warming or other unknown environmental factors it has become a noticeable later freeze up on these rivers. In the past few seasons the month of November has been mild and conditions have not warranted the October 31st closure this can be supported by weather records and water temperatures recorded by the USGS stream gauge located on the Anchor River. Fish and Game would still have the authority to close the fishery by Emergency Order at any time if conditions warrant it.

Additionally these stocks are not a concern of depletion/sustainability. If the department of Fish and Game was truly concerned about the status of Steelhead in these streams and or were concerned about their vulnerability current regulations would reflect that. Historically the legal use of bait and multiple hooks during King Salmon season during late May and early June coincides with the outmigration of Steelhead to the saltwater after spawning. Incidental Steelhead mortality due to bait, multiple hooks, and poor catch and release tactics can run quite high during the King Salmon seasons due to the poor condition the Steelhead kelts are in due to spawning and being in the river all winter. (Should be noted that bait and multiple hooks were not allowed last few years by emergency order due to low King Salmon numbers, however as King Salmon rebound bait and multiple hooks will be allowed.) Additionally bait and multiple hooks are allowed during the month of August to target Silver Salmon however Steelhead are present and caught at this time as well. In short one day of bait fishing for King Salmon will kill more Steelhead than the additional 2 weeks of catch and release in November.

Who will benefit: resident and non-resident anglers, all businesses from Girdwood to Homer especially those in the Anchor Pt. and Ninilchik area from an additional 2 weeks of anglers spending money in the communities. State of Alaska: more revenue from fishing licence sales and state park camping and parking fees. Kenai River anglers and fisheries will not see as much pressure and crowded conditions from November 1-15th due to increased opportunities elsewhere.

Negative impacts: additional dolly varden char will be harvested in this fishery, and an unknown amount of Steelhead mortality will occur due to catch and release during these 2 weeks.

If nothing is done than angler opportunity will continue to have been unnecessarily taken away from resident and non-resident anglers to enjoy that was not based on sound science. Local economies, businesses and the State of Alaska will continue to lose out on additional revenues.

PROPOSED BY: Jon Madison (EF-F16-005)

PROPOSAL 8 - 5 AAC 56.122. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area. Extend the start date for king salmon fishery on the Ninilchik from July 1 to June 16, as follows:

Because of the large increase in the numbers of hatchery King Salmon being released in the Ninilchik River, move the opening day of the regular hatchery King Salmon opening from July 1st to June 16th, to allow increased opportunity to harvest these fish, while they are available, and in prime condition.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Recently, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game has significantly increased the number of King Salmon fingerlings being released into the Ninilchik River, and would like to see an increased opportunity to harvest these fish when they return as adults. The current regulations on the Ninilchik River allow fishing for King Salmon for just three 3-day weekends, starting on Memorial weekend. After that last 3-day weekend, the Ninilchik River remains closed for up to 22 days until July 1st, depending on

where Memorial weekend falls on the calendar each year. On July 1st, the Ninilchik River reopens for hatchery King Salmon fishing only, on a daily basis.

This long closure in June is a lost opportunity to harvest hatchery King Salmon on the Ninilchik River, when they are in prime condition, and within reach of the two mile fishing limit marker on that river. In June of 2015, the Ninilchik River was only open for King Salmon fishing for 4 days, and in June of 2016, it is scheduled to open for 6 days.

PROPOSED BY: Gary Sinnhuber (EF-F16-157)

PROPOSAL 9 - 5 AAC 56.122. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area. Increase the bag limit for king salmon on the Ninilchik River to 2 per day, only 1 may be wild, as follows:

Go back to the daily bag limit for King Salmon over 20" on the Ninilchik River, as it was prior to 2014, allowing the harvest of 2 King Salmon per day, where just 1 fish could be a wild King Salmon. After taking this daily bag limit, a person may not fish for any species on that same day.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Recently, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game has significantly increased the number of King Salmon fingerlings being released into the Ninilchik River, and would like to see an increased opportunity to harvest these fish. Currently, the bag limit for King Salmon over 20" is 1 King Salmon per day, either wild or hatchery. For at least 9 years prior to 2014, the bag limit for King Salmon over 20" was 2 King Salmon per day, but where just 1 fish could be a wild King Salmon.

PROPOSED BY: Gary Sinnhuber (EF-F16-141)

(Proposal 10 was submitted by two proposers. The proposal and justification for each proposer is listed below.)

PROPOSAL 10 - 5 AAC 56.122. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area. Require mandatory retention of king salmon caught with bait on Anchor River, Deep Creek, and the Ninilchik River, as follows:

The solution to this problem would be to eliminate the option of catch and release with bait. If you want to fish with bait because of its effectiveness and your goal is to catch fish for the freezer, that's ok. However, once you land a fish, that fish must be retained. The option to catch and release with bait killing as many as 6 out of 10 as fish are "sorted through" no longer exists.

New regulation would read to the effect of **During the dates of (normally stated King Salmon fishing dates) fishermen choosing to use bait who land a King Salmon over the length of 20 inches must retain that fish and immediately record their catch. The practice of catch and release of King Salmon using bait is prohibited.**

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? There are insufficient opportunities for youth only fisheries. In order to promote youth fishing there should be time and dates specifically for youth fishing only.

PROPOSED BY: Mike Priebe (EF-F16-156)

PROPOSAL 12 - 5 AAC 56.122. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area. Create a youth-only fishery on Anchor, Deep Creek, and Ninilchik rivers, as follows:

The solution: Create a youth sports fishery on the Anchor River, Ninilchik River, and Deep Creek. Fishery would be held within the normally open geographic boundaries between the hours for 6-9pm on the Fridays preceding the open weekends on the prospective streams. The fishery would be available to those Alaskans between the ages of 6 and 15. This age does not require a fishing license or king salmon stamp, but would require a youth fishery form to record their catch. The annual limit would be 1 per year total between the streams within the special fishery (A successful catch in the youth fishery would not stop them from fishing in normal fisheries). This fishery could be managed very similarly to the extremely successful Big Game Youth Hunts found within the State already.

This proposal would also meet 1 of the 3 stated core values in the 2015-2020 Fish and Game Strategic Plan - Excellence in Fisheries management and research for the benefit of sport anglers, the State's economy, and **future generations of Alaskans.**

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The King Salmon fishery of the lower Cook Inlet steams Anchor River, Ninilchik River, and Deep Creek have seen a large increase in pressure over the years. This increased pressure and the way in which the fishing periods are managed (opening at 12:00am) have impacted the fishing quality for our future Alaskans. When the the fishery opens the amount of light is very low. Hooks fly around and most adults' attention falls upon catching their own fish. When day breaks the majority of the aggressive more easily caught fish have been taken and the opportunity for our youth to catch a Wild Alaskan King Salmon is extremely low.

If nothing is changed the amount of young alaskans entering and showing interest in sports fishing will continue to decline.

PROPOSED BY: Zach Stubbs (EF-F16-162)

PROPOSAL 13 - 5 AAC 56.122. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area. Create a disabled angler-only fishing area on the Anchor River, as follows:

The Department of Fish and Game shall dedicate a Handicap only (and Disabled Veteran) fishing area from the Anchor Rive bridge downstream 200'. This area will be for the exclusive use of those

who qualify using the same standards as the already established and successful Russian River site. The Handicap only area would only be "live" during the King Salmon season. The required improvements to access the area would be provided for at no cost to the State of Alaska.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? In South-central Alaska there are no areas dedicated to exclusive use King Salmon fishing for handicap persons and disabled veterans. While there has been much success with the handicap access/ fishery for Sockeye Salmon on the Russian River, there has yet to be a dedicated area for King Salmon. Access to one of Alaska's most valuable resources is extremely difficult for or physically challenged citizens.

If nothing changes our handicap Alaskans and disabled veterans will continue to only have a dedicated area for Sockeye Salmon and lacking for King Salmon.

PROPOSED BY: Zach Stubbs (EF-F16-166)

(Proposal 14 will be heard and public testimony will be taken at both the LCI and UCI meetings and deliberated at the UCI meeting).

PROPOSAL 14 - 5 AAC 56.122. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area. Allow snagging for sockeye salmon in all Cook Inlet freshwater lakes, as follows:

Allow sockeye salmon not hooked in the mouth to be retained in Fresh water Lakes in the Cook Inlet Drainage.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? It is almost impossible to catch sockeye salmon in the mouth unless there is some current, Sockeye salmon do not bite unless in late spawning stage,

PROPOSED BY: Andy Housh (EF-F16-135)

PROPOSAL 15 – 5 AAC 58.022. Waters; seasons; bag, possession, annual, and size limits; and special provisions for Cook Inlet–Resurrection Bay Saltwater Area.; and 5 AAC 58.060. Lower Cook Inlet Winter Salt Water King Salmon Sport Fishery Management Plan. Modify the king salmon bag and possession limit north of the latitude of Bluff Point, the Cook Inlet harvest record requirement, and the *Winter King Salmon Management Plan* to include all Cook Inlet salt waters from September 1 through March 31, and review the guideline harvest level, as follows:

5 AAC 58.022(b)(1) is amended to read:

- (b).....
 - (1) in waters of Cook Inlet north of the latitude of Bluff Point (59° 40.00' N. lat.):
 - (A) king salmon: