

ACR 1

Increase subsistence fishing opportunity for salmon in the Copper River District (5 AAC 01.610).

CITE THE REGULATION THAT WILL BE CHANGED IF THIS ACR IS HEARD.

5 AAC 01.610(g)

WHAT IS THE PROBLEM YOU WOULD LIKE THE BOARD TO ADDRESS? STATE IN DETAIL THE NATURE OF THE CURRENT PROBLEM.

Copper River drift gillnet subsistence users have, for years, had time and area taken away, providing a sharp decline in opportunity to harvest subsistence fish, which is Constitutionally mandated to be the highest priority for this fishery, which is catch limited with the lowest limits of any subsistence fishery on the Copper River, while harvesting from mixed stocks. The loss of time and area is owed largely to the fact that the management of the subsistence fishery is linked to the commercial fishery, and these should be decoupled in order to prioritize subsistence. Since the Board of Fish passed Proposal 51 at the last Prince William Sound/Copper River meeting it placed into statute, subsistence users have effectively lost multiple opportunities that would have previously been available co-occurring with the lost commercial periods, and the Saturday subsistence openers between. In addition, new expanded inside area closures for the commercial fishery have been applied to the subsistence fishery each year, requiring subsistence users, often in small river skiffs, to cross dangerous ocean bars in the Gulf of Alaska to participate. We seek to limit the extent to which subsistence opportunity can be curtailed by Emergency Orders issued by Department of Fish and Game managers, especially prior to the start of the Commercial fishery. We further seek to maintain inside waters as open to subsistence fishing throughout the season before we have a completely avoidable and needless tragedy occur, which is inevitable when river skiffs are forced to cross ocean bars to fish in the Gulf of Alaska.

WHAT SOLUTION DO YOU PREFER?

We prefer subsistence fisheries to be open from the regulatory start of the subsistence fishing season until 48 hours before the first Commercial fishing period in all waters, and for subsistence users who are not also Commercial operators to be allowed to subsistence fish in all waters during subsistence-only periods.

STATE IN DETAIL HOW THIS ACR MEETS THE CRITERIA STATED BELOW.

for a fishery conservation purpose or reason:

to correct an error in regulation:

to correct an effect on a fishery that was unforeseen when a regulation was adopted:

The Board of Fish adopted Proposal 51 for the purpose of Chinook Salmon conservation, substantially modifying a proposal submitted by the National Park Service that sought an escapement-based trigger for Commercial openers based on sockeye passage. The Board did not adequately consider impacts to the subsistence fishery and should act to restore our access to these subsistence resources, remove unnecessary restrictions on a catch-limited fishery, remove

unnecessary hazards to participation, and liberalize the subsistence fishery for the Alaskans who rely on this fishery for food security and do not participate in the Commercial fishery.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF THIS PROBLEM IS NOT SOLVED PRIOR TO THE REGULAR CYCLE?

Each season we endure the current subsistence regulation, users are denied the opportunity to harvest salmon, and pushed into dangerous waters where a tragedy is inevitable.

STATE WHY YOUR ACR IS NOT PREDOMINANTLY ALLOCATIVE.

We seek to restore time and area to a catch-limited fishery.

IF THIS REQUEST IS ALLOCATIVE, STATE THE NEW INFORMATION THAT COMPELS THE BOARD TO CONSIDER AN ALLOCATIVE PROPOSAL OUTSIDE OF THE REGULAR CYCLE.

STATE YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN THE FISHERY THAT IS THE SUBJECT OF THIS ACR.

The Native Village of Eyak is a Tribal Sovereign Government whose members rely on this subsistence fishery, and have done so for millenia.

STATE WHETHER THIS ACR HAS BEEN CONSIDERED BEFORE, EITHER AS A PROPOSAL OR AS AN ACR, AND IF SO, DURING WHICH BOARD OF FISHERIES

This ACR has not been considered before.

SUBMITTED BY: The Native Village of Eyak