

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

STAFF COMMENTS ON AGENDA CHANGE REQUESTS

ALASKA BOARD OF FISHERIES WORK SESSION ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

OCTOBER 28–29, 2026



Regional Information Report No. 5J26-07

The following staff comments were prepared by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (department) for use at the Alaska Board of Fisheries (board) work session meeting, October 28–29, 2026 in Anchorage, Alaska. The comments are forwarded to assist the public and board. The comments contained herein should be considered preliminary and subject to change as new information becomes available. Final department positions will be formulated after review of written and oral public testimony presented to the board.

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Weights and measures (metric)		General		Acronyms	
centimeter	cm	Alaska Administrative Code		Acceptable Biological Catch	ABC
deciliter	dL		AAC	Alaska Board of Fisheries	board
gram	g	all commonly accepted abbreviations	e.g., Mr., Mrs., AM, PM, etc.	Alaska Department of Fish and Game	department /ADF&G
hectare	ha				
kilogram	kg	all commonly accepted professional titles	e.g., Dr., Ph.D., R.N., etc.	Amount Necessary for Subsistence	ANS
kilometer	km			Alaska Wildlife Troopers	AWT
liter	L	at	@	Biological Escapement Goal	BEG
meter	m	compass directions:		Central Gulf of Alaska	CGOA
milliliter	mL	east	E	Coded Wire Tag	CWT
millimeter	mm	north	N	Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission	CFEC
		south	S	Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association	CIAA
Weights and measures (English)		west	W	Customary and Traditional Department of Natural Resources	C&T DNR
cubic feet per second	ft³/s	copyright	©	Demersal Shelf Rockfish	DSR
foot	ft	corporate suffixes:		Emergency Order	EO
gallon	gal	Company	Co.	Guideline Harvest Level	GHL
inch	in	Corporation	Corp.	Gulf of Alaska	GOA
mile	mi	Incorporated	Inc.	Global Positioning System	GPS
nautical mile	nmi	Limited	Ltd.	Individual Fishing Quota	IFQ
ounce	oz	District of Columbia et alii (and others) et cetera (and so forth) exempli gratia (for example)	D.C. et al. etc.	Local Area Management Plan	LAMP
pound	lb	Federal Information Code	FIC	Lower Cook Inlet	LCI
quart	qt	id est (that is)	i.e.	Mean Low Water	MLW
yard	yd	latitude or longitude	lat or long	Mean Lower Low Water	MLLW
		monetary symbols (U.S.)	\$, ¢	No Data	ND
Time and temperature		months (tables and figures): first three letters	Jan,...,Dec	National Marine Fisheries Service	NMFS
day	d	registered trademark	®	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration	NOAA
degrees Celsius	°C	trademark	™	Nick Dudiak Fishing Lagoon	NDFL
degrees Fahrenheit	°F	United States (adjective)	U.S.	North Pacific Fishery Management Council	NPFMC
degrees kelvin	K	United States of America (noun)	USA	Optimum Escapement Goal	OEG
hour	h	U.S.C.	United States Code	Pelagic Shelf Rockfish	PSR
minute	min	U.S. state	use two-letter abbreviations (e.g., AK, WA)	Prince William Sound	PWS
second	s			Prior Notice of Landing	PNOL
Physics and chemistry				Private Nonprofit Salmon Hatchery	PNP
all atomic symbols				River Mile	RM
alternating current	AC			Special Harvest Area	SHA
ampere	A			Sustainable Escapement Goal	SEG
calorie	cal			Trail Lakes Hatchery	TLH
direct current	DC			Upper Cook Inlet	UCI
hertz	Hz			Western Gulf of Alaska	WGOA
horsepower	hp				
hydrogen ion activity (negative log of)	pH				
parts per million	ppm				
parts per thousand	ppt, ‰				
volts	V				
watts	W				

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ANCHORAGE, ALASKA**

OCTOBER 28–29, 2026

by
Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Division of Sport Fish, Research and Technical Services
333 Raspberry Road, Anchorage, Alaska, 99518-1565

October 2026

ABSTRACT

This document contains Alaska Department of Fish and Game (department) staff comments on agenda change requests. These comments were prepared by the department for use at the Alaska Board of Fisheries (board) meeting, October 28–29, 2026, in Anchorage, Alaska. The comments are forwarded to assist the public and board. The comments contained herein should be considered preliminary and subject to change, as new information becomes available. Final department positions will be formulated after review of written and oral public testimony presented to the board.

Keywords: Alaska Board of Fisheries (board), Alaska Department of Fish and Game (department), staff comments, regulatory proposals, fisheries, work session, agenda change request (ACR), salmon, drones, European green crab, management, management plan, inriver, subsistence, personal use, sport, commercial fisheries, salmon fisheries.

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ACR 1 – Increase subsistence fishing opportunity for salmon in the Copper River District (5 AAC 01.610).

WHAT THE AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST SEEKS TO CHANGE: This seeks to open the Copper River District subsistence fishery continuously from the start of the season on May 15 until two days prior to the commercial opening of the district. It also seeks to allow subsistence permit holders, who are not commercial permit holders, to fish in all district waters during subsistence-only fishing periods.

PRESENT SITUATION: In the Copper River District, salmon may be taken for subsistence from May 15 until two days before the commercial opening of the district, and on every Saturday during the commercial fishing season (5 ACC 01.610(g)(1) and (2)). When subsistence fishing occurs concurrently with a commercial fishing period, the time and area remain the same for both user groups. During extended closures of the Copper River commercial fishery, additional subsistence opportunity is provided through the department’s emergency order authority.

In December 2024, the Alaska Board of Fisheries (board) adopted a regulation changing the opening of the Copper River District commercial fishery from May 15 to May 22. The board also directed the department to limit the subsistence fishery to one fishing period before the first commercial fishing period; however, it did not change the regulation. Therefore, in 2025 and 2026, following the board's direction, only one 16-hour period was allowed before May 22. Under the existing subsistence regulatory language, the subsistence fishery would remain open continuously from May 15 until two days before the start of the commercial fishery. Historically, when the commercial fishery opened on or around May 15, the subsistence fishery opened three times before May 22. At the same 2024 meeting, the board did not adopt Proposal 45, which sought to open subsistence fishing in the inside closure area described in 5 AAC 24.350(1)(B), regardless of which fishing area is being used in the commercial fishery.

STAFF ASSESSMENT OF THE AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST:

- a) **Is there a fishery conservation purpose or reason?** No
- b) **Does the agenda change request correct an error in regulation?** No.
- c) **Does the agenda change request address an effect of a regulation on a fishery that was unforeseen when that regulation was adopted?** No.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Beginning in 2025, the board shifted the Copper River District commercial salmon fishery opening date from May 15 to May 22 to allow a greater portion of early-run salmon, particularly king salmon, to migrate upriver. This change was part of a broader effort to conserve Copper River king salmon, including adjustments to upper Copper River personal use and sport fishing regulations to better reflect current salmon abundance and migration timing. The department opens the inside waters area, by EO, to subsistence fishing in the Egg Island area of the Copper River District to provide for a safe small-boat subsistence fishery near Cordova. This represents about a third of the district's inside waters. Expanding inside-waters access for subsistence users throughout the district would provide entry to the shallow, channelized areas within the barrier islands, increasing efficiency for those targeting king salmon during subsistence periods. When the department closed all inside and nearshore commercial fishing areas in 2025 and 2026, subsistence fishing in the Egg Island inside waters remained open.

PROPOSED BY: The Native Village of Eyak.

ACR 2 - Specify escapement objectives that must be met prior to opening the Copper River District to commercial fishing for salmon (5 AAC 24.310).

WHAT THE AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST SEEKS TO CHANGE: This seeks to modify the opening of the Copper River District commercial salmon fishery until at least one Miles Lake sonar daily objective has been met. It also seeks to provide further discretionary guidance to close the commercial fishery until the midpoint Miles Lake sonar cumulative objective has been met.

PRESENT SITUATION: In December 2024, the Alaska Board of Fisheries adopted a regulation shifting the opening date of the Copper River District commercial fishery from May 15 to May 22. The department manages Copper River sockeye and king salmon runs to meet an inriver goal that accounts for upriver subsistence, personal use, and sport harvests, along with the fish needed to achieve sustainable escapement goals. In managing fisheries, the department relies on the best available information, including harvest levels, run timing, environmental conditions, age composition, and escapement estimates. Escapement is calculated by subtracting inriver harvest estimates from counts produced by the Miles Lake sonar. Copper River salmon runs are managed to ensure sustained yield under the provisions of 5 AAC 01.647 *Copper River Subsistence Fisheries Management Plans*, 5 AAC 24.360 *Copper River District Salmon Management Plan*, and 5 AAC 77.591 *Copper River Personal Use Dip Net Salmon Fishery Management Plan*. For king salmon specifically, 5 AAC 24.361 *Copper River King Salmon Management Plan* directs management of the commercial, sport, personal use, and subsistence fisheries and requires the department to achieve a sustainable escapement goal of 21,000 to 31,000 king salmon.

STAFF ASSESSMENT OF THE AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST:

- d) **Is there a fishery conservation purpose or reason?** No
- e) **Does the agenda change request correct an error in regulation?** No.
- f) **Does the agenda change request address an effect of a regulation on a fishery that was unforeseen when that regulation was adopted?** No.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Beginning in 2025, the board shifted the Copper River District commercial salmon fishery opening date from May 15 to May 22 to allow a greater portion of early-run salmon, particularly king salmon, to migrate upriver. This change was part of a broader effort to conserve Copper River king salmon, including adjustments to upper Copper River personal use and sport fishing regulations to better reflect current salmon abundance and migration timing. Over the last two decades, Copper River king salmon productivity has declined in line with statewide trends. From 2003 to 2021, the drainagewide escapement goal had a lower bound of 24,000 king salmon, and beginning in 2021 the goal became 21,000–31,000 fish. To meet this goal, the department implemented restrictions in the commercial fishery to reduce king salmon harvest. Under 5 AAC 24.361, during statistical weeks 20 and 21, the department may open no more than one 12-hour fishing period in the inside closure area. This inside-waters strategy was developed because most king salmon are harvested in shallow nearshore waters. In practice, the department has not opened inside waters during these early weeks and has taken further action by consistently expanding inside-waters closures beyond what regulation requires. These closures often encompass the entire remaining king and early sockeye salmon returns.

Early-season Miles Lake sonar passage has lagged management objectives in seven of the last ten years, primarily due to cold springs with below-average air and water temperatures. Low, cold water, and lingering ice delay salmon migration through the district and into the river. To account

for this, the department reduces fishing time and area to avoid excessive harvest pressure on early-timed fish. Historically, reduced early-season harvest efficiency during colder years has produced a compressed pulse of early salmon moving upriver, often meeting and then exceeding sonar passage objectives later in the season.

The upper Copper River sockeye escapement goal has been met every year for the last twenty years and exceeded four times, while the king salmon escapement goal has been achieved in fourteen of the last twenty years despite historically small runs. Copper River fisheries continue to be managed using long-established, data-driven practices designed to ensure sustained yield.

PROPOSED BY: Andrew Couch.

ACR 3 – Reduce statewide private nonprofit salmon hatchery egg-take capacity to less than 100 million eggs annually (5 AAC 40.XXX).

WHAT THE AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST SEEKS TO CHANGE: Reduce statewide private nonprofit salmon hatchery egg-take capacity from 2.6 billion eggs to less than 100 million eggs annually.

PRESENT SITUATION: In Alaska, there are currently 29 salmon hatchery permits issued to private nonprofit corporations. In 2025, the total permitted egg-take capacity for these facilities was 2,578,220,000 eggs. Hatcheries contributed 65.7 million salmon to the total commercial harvest of 193.8 million salmon. This amounted to \$138 million of the total commercial harvest value of \$541 million.

STAFF ASSESSMENT OF THE AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST:

- a) **Is there a fishery conservation purpose or reason?** No.
- b) **Does the agenda change request correct an error in regulation?** No.
- c) **Does the agenda change request address an effect of a regulation on a fishery that was unforeseen when that regulation was adopted?** No.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Private nonprofit salmon hatchery egg-take capacity is regulated through statute, administrative code, and terms in each hatchery's permit. Proposed changes to the egg-take level on a hatchery permit are reviewed by area, regional, and statewide department staff and the appropriate Regional Planning Team (RPT). Recommendations from staff, RPT, and the public are submitted to the Commissioner of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game for consideration before the decision to approve or deny is made.

The board has authority to directly amend hatchery permit terms related to the source and number of salmon eggs (AS 16.10.440(b)). It is unclear whether the Alaska Legislature intended that authority to be used in regulating broodstock collection in a special harvest area where the common use clause no longer applies (AS 16.10.440(a); O'Callahan v. Rue, 996 P.2d 88). In 1979, when AS 16.10.440 was amended, there were very few hatchery broodstock sources returning to special harvest areas, which made it necessary for hatchery operators to obtain broodstock from wild sources. The take of wild salmon for hatchery broodstock has allocative implications the board may wish to consider. Additionally in 1979, the board authority over possession, transport, and release of live fish had not yet been delegated to the department. The board may not adopt regulations or take any action regarding the issuance or denial of any permits required in AS 16.10.400–AS 16.10.470 (AS 16.10.440(b)).

PROPOSED BY: Timothy Gervais.

ACR 4 – Clarification of drone usage and hook terminology in sport fishing regulation (5 AAC 75.020 Sport fishing gear)

WHAT THE AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST SEEKS TO CHANGE: This ACR seeks clarification regarding the use of drones and remote-controlled boats for sport fishing, as well as the terminology used to describe hooks in sport fishing regulations.

PRESENT SITUATION: The use of drones and remote-controlled boats are permitted to deploy a fishing line but that line must be held in the hand or attached to a pole or rod and must be closely attended. Definitions for single hook and multiple hook are defined in regulation.

STAFF ASSESSMENT OF THE AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST:

- a) **Is there a fishery conservation purpose or reason?** No
- b) **Does the agenda change request correct an error in regulation?** No
- c) **Does the agenda change request address an effect of a regulation on a fishery that was unforeseen when that regulation was adopted?** No

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: During the Board of Fisheries meeting for Statewide Finfish & Supplemental Issues, March 17–21, 2026. The board adopted proposal 181 which aligned the statutory definition (AS 16.05.940(31)) and regulatory definition (5 AAC 75.020(a)) of “sport fishing.” This action clarified that drones and remote-controlled boats may be used to deploy a fishing line, but that line must be attached to a fishing pole or rod or held in the hand.

Two hook types are defined by regulation:

“**single hook**” (5 AAC 75.995 (26)) means a fish hook with only one point with or without a barb.

“**multiple hook**” (5 AAC 75.995)(16) means a fish hook with two or more points with or without barbs.

Unless otherwise specified, sport fishing may be conducted with up to two hooks per line (either single or multiple point). The subtlety of the regulatory definitions can lead to confusion where anglers may not understand that often two, multiple hooks, may be used when sport fishing. To provide clear and consistent guidance for anglers, a page dedicated to displaying legal hook types and orientations for sport fishing is included in the annual regulation summary’s (e.g., 2026 Southcentral Sport Fishing Regulation Summary, pg. 89)

PROPOSED BY: Roger Peterson.

ACR 5 – Reclassify European green crab from a class A to a class B banned invasive species (5 AAC 41.075)

WHAT THE AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST SEEKS TO CHANGE: This would permit the possession and consumption of dead European green crab by reclassifying the species from a class A to a class B banned invasive species.

PRESENT SITUATION: European green crab are classified as a class A banned invasive species. A person may not possess any part of a class A banned invasive species except when delivering them to a department officer or under the provisions of an aquatic resource permit.

STAFF ASSESSMENT OF THE AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST:

- a) **Is there a fishery conservation purpose or reason?** No. Although European green crab are an invasive species, this proposal does not address a conservation concern and is more appropriately considered in-cycle.
- b) **Does the agenda change request correct an error in regulation?** No.
- c) **Does the agenda change request address an effect of a regulation on a fishery that was unforeseen when that regulation was adopted?** No.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: During the March 2023 Board of Fisheries meeting on Statewide Finfish and Supplemental Issues, the board adopted proposal 169, which created two classifications for banned invasive species. Existing regulations continue to apply to class A banned invasive species, while the board established a new class B category for invasive species identified as having food value. The class B designation was intended to balance the protection of Alaska's aquatic resources with the legal harvest, import, and consumption of certain harmful invasive species. Class B species may only be possessed if they are dead.

European green crab are classified as a class A banned invasive species because of the limited food value due to their small size and low meat yield (less than 0.5 ounces per crab). In Southeast Alaska, where European green crab have been detected, other more desirable crab species, such as Dungeness and tanner crab are commonly targeted and harvested. Research from areas where European green crab are not native indicates that recreational harvest of European green crab has not proven as effective as targeted intensive trapping to suppress populations. Monitoring or removal efforts involving the trapping of European green crab are permitted under the terms of an aquatic resource permit.

PROPOSED BY: Bergen Kludt-Painter.

ACR 6 and 7 – Establish a 10 consecutive day closure between June 10 and June 23 for seine and drift gillnet gear in the South Unimak and Shumagin Islands June Salmon Management Plan (5 AAC 09.365).

WHAT THE AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST SEEKS TO CHANGE: This ACR would amend the South Unimak and Shumagin Islands June Salmon Management Plan (5 AAC 09.365), using RC 245 and a verbal amendment from the February 2026 Board of Fisheries (board) meeting, to allow 64-hour fishing periods followed by 32-hour closures for set gillnet gear, beginning at 6:00 a.m. on June 6, with the final period closing at 10:00 p.m. on June 28. Beginning June 10, purse-seine and drift-gillnet periods would be limited to no more than three days in any seven-day period and could not be open more than 24 hours in a day.

PRESENT SITUATION: The *South Unimak and Shumagin Islands June Salmon Management Plan* (5 AAC 09.365) is in effect from June 6 through June 28. The June fishery includes the Unimak District, Bechevin Bay Section of the Northwestern District, the Southwestern District, and the West Pavlof Bay and East Pavlof Bay Sections of the South Central District and the Shumagin Islands Section of the Southeastern District. Fishing periods for the June fishery occur from 6:00 a.m. June 6 until 10:00 p.m. June 8 for 64 hours for set gillnet gear only followed by a closure of 32 hours. Commercial fishing periods for set gillnet and drift gillnet gear begin at 6:00 a.m. on June 10, there are four 88-hour fishing periods interspersed by 32-hour closures with the final fishing period ending at 10:00 p.m. on June 28. The first commercial fishing period for purse seine gear begins at 5:59 a.m. on June 10 and closes after 68 hours at 1:59 a.m.; the second commercial fishing period begins 76 hours later at 5:59 a.m., then closes after 66 hours at 11:59 p.m.; the third fishing period begins 32 hours later at 7:59 a.m., then closes after 88 hours at 11:59 p.m.; the final fishing period begins 32 hours later at 7:59 p.m., then closes after 88 hours at 11:59 p.m.

If the chum salmon harvest equals or exceeds 300,000 fish by June 18, commercial fishing time is reduced in the South Unimak and Shumagin Islands June fisheries by 44 hours during each of the remaining fishing periods in June for purse seine gear. If chum salmon harvest equals or exceeds 450,000 fish by June 23, then commercial salmon fishing will close for the remainder of June for purse seine gear.

STAFF ASSESSMENT OF THE AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST:

- a) **Is there a fishery conservation purpose or reason?** No
- b) **Does the agenda change request correct an error in regulation?** No.
- c) **Does the agenda change request address an effect of a regulation on a fishery that was unforeseen when that regulation was adopted?** No.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Since the early 1920s, managers have understood that the Alaska Peninsula fishery is a mixed stock fishery that harvests local and non-local salmon stocks. Mixed stock salmon fisheries are designed and implemented with the understanding that salmon originating from a range of locations will be harvested. Because of the known mixed stock nature of Alaska Peninsula fisheries, management plans for Alaska Peninsula fisheries include regulations addressing allocations and stipulations based on the strength of both local and non-local salmon runs.

In 2001, management of this area included concurrent fishing times for all gear types. In February 2004, the board established a commercial salmon fishery schedule that began on June 7 at 6:00 a.m. The board set fishing periods at 88 hours in length and separated by 32-hour closures. The board set the fishery closure at 10:00 p.m. on June 29 with the last fishing period lasting 64 hours in duration. The board modified the June fishing schedule several times, changing the length of fishery periods, and sometimes opening for different gear types at different times. The current schedule, described above, has been in effect since 2023. At the time, the board made the majority of the changes to the purse seine gear schedule and established chum salmon “triggers” that would reduce the final two fishing periods by 44 hours if the triggers are met by June 18 or eliminate the final fishing period if the triggers are met by June 23 for purse seine gear only. The Sanak Island Section was also closed to all gear types during the month of June.

In response to subsistence fishing closures in western Alaska, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (department) initiated a genetic study of chum salmon harvested in the South Alaska Peninsula in 2022. Detailed results from that study are available in a separate report (Dann et al. 2023).

In 2022, the June fishery harvested 544,064 chum salmon across all districts, gear types, and strata which was considerably larger harvest than July and August harvests. The Asia group (58.0%) contributed the largest proportion of the harvest in June with an estimated 315,162 fish. The Central Western Alaska (CWAK) group (17.7%) had the second largest contribution with an estimated 96,116 fish and the East of Kodiak group (13.4%) contributed an estimated 72,712 fish. Harvests from other reporting groups were relatively small. The total 2023 June fishery harvest across all districts, gear types, and strata was considerably smaller than July and August harvests, with a total June harvest of 206,037 chum salmon. The Asia group (39.5%) contributed the largest proportion of harvest in June with an estimated 81,411 fish. The CWAK group (28.4%) had the second largest contribution with an estimated 58,497 fish and the East of Kodiak group (19.9%) with an estimated 41,448 fish.

From 2023 through 2026, the commercial seine fleet and processors attempted to curtail their overall harvest of chum salmon through continuous communication that enabled the fleet to relay catch information to one another in real time. The fleet communicated daily with the department on a regular basis to inform them of self-initiated seine fleet closures. Except for the 50% reduction of the fishing periods that were implemented in 2023 and 2024 to conserve Chignik River early run sockeye salmon, all other reductions in fishing time within the regulatory fishing periods were voluntarily instituted by the fleet. There were two forms of self-imposed closures: closures for either the Shumagin Islands Section and/or the entire South Unimak area, which encompasses waters within the Southwestern and Unimak Districts and area-specific standdowns by the fleet. It is the department’s understanding that the self-regulating closures were enacted to reduce the fleet’s overall harvest of chum salmon and to stay below the triggers that would reduce fishing in all areas by 50% for seine gear if the first trigger was met on June 18 and close the South Alaska Peninsula for seine gear if the second trigger was met on June 23. The area-specific standdowns were a method that the fleet used to react quickly when a high abundance of chum salmon was in the area and attempt to keep harvest of sockeye to chum salmon above the 2:1 ratio.

PROPOSED BY: Orutsarmiut Native Council (ACR 6) and Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee (ACR 7).

ACR 8 – Amend the Post-June Salmon Management Plan for the South Alaska Peninsula to enforce king salmon caps with reductions in commercial salmon fishing time in the South Alaska Peninsula (5 AAC 09.366).

WHAT THE AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST SEEKS TO CHANGE: This would create 2 king salmon harvest triggers that could come into effect in any statistical area in the South Alaska Peninsula Management Area beginning July 1. If the commercial harvest of king salmon is greater than 1,000 fish during a regulatory fishing period, the statistical area(s) primarily responsible for this harvest of king salmon would remain closed during the subsequent regulatory commercial fishing period. If harvest of king salmon surpasses 5,000 fish, the statistical area(s) primarily responsible for this harvest of king salmon would close to commercial fishing immediately and remain closed through August 10.

PRESENT SITUATION: From June 1 through October 31, all king salmon 28 inches or greater in length caught may not be retained and must be immediately returned to the water unharmed.

A permit holder shall retain all visibly injured or dead king salmon caught and record the injured or dead king salmon on an ADF&G fish ticket as described in 5 AAC 39.130(c).

There are no king salmon harvest caps in the South Alaska Peninsula Area.

STAFF ASSESSMENT OF THE AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST:

- a) **Is there a fishery conservation purpose or reason?** No
- b) **Does the agenda change request correct an error in regulation?** No.
- c) **Does the agenda change request address an effect of a regulation on a fishery that was unforeseen when that regulation was adopted?** No.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Due to concerns for Gulf of Alaska king salmon stocks, the department has taken unprecedented steps to conserve king salmon by restricting numerous commercial salmon fisheries in the Westward Region. Over the past several years these actions have included various king salmon harvest caps and nonretention of king salmon over 28” in length.

At the February 2026 Alaska Peninsula and Chignik Board of Fisheries meeting, the board adopted a regulation requiring nonretention of all king salmon 28 inches or longer caught in purse-seine gear in the Alaska Peninsula and Chignik management areas and adopted a king salmon harvest cap as part of the *Chignik Area King Salmon Stock of Concern Management Plan*.

In 2025 the department set a harvest threshold of 1,000 king salmon in the Shumagin Islands Section of the Southeastern District. If more than 1,000 king salmon were harvested during a regulatory fishing period in July, then the next 36-hour fishing period would close to purse seine gear in statistical area 282-11. This would effectively close fishing for approximately 6 ½ days.

The department implemented management actions based on harvest of king salmon in the Shumagin Island Section of the Southeastern District in July 2025. The department did not open two scheduled commercial salmon fishing periods in July in the Shumagin Islands section due to king salmon harvest in the statistical area 282-11 that surpassed the threshold of 1,000 fish. These fishing periods were July 14-15 and July 22-23.

PROPOSED BY: Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee.

ACR 9 – Reduce maximum gillnet depth in the Alaska Peninsula Area to 70 meshes (5 AAC 09.331).

WHAT THE AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST SEEKS TO CHANGE: This would reduce the depth of commercial drift gillnets from 90 meshes in depth to 70 meshes in depth in the Northwestern, Unimak, and Southwestern Districts.

PRESENT SITUATION: Drift gillnets operated in the Northwestern, Unimak, and Southwestern Districts may not exceed 90 meshes in depth.

STAFF ASSESSMENT OF THE AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST:

- a) **Is there a fishery conservation purpose or reason?** No
- b) **Does the agenda change request correct an error in regulation?** No
- c) **Does the agenda change request address an effect of a regulation on a fishery that was unforeseen when that regulation was adopted?** No

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Prior to 1990, depth of both commercial drift and set gillnet gear were unlimited. In 1990, due to concerns over harvest of chum salmon, the depth of drift gillnet gear in the Northwestern, Unimak, and Southwestern Districts were limited to 90 meshes. The regulation for minimum mesh size for drift gillnet gear was repealed in 2016 and for set gillnet gear in 2019.

PROPOSED BY: Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee.

ACR 10 – Amend Alaska Peninsula Area seine specifications to reduce net size (5 AAC 09.332).

WHAT THE AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST SEEKS TO CHANGE: Amend the seine specification to reduce the allowable size gear as follows:

(a) Purse seines or hand purse seines may not be less than 100 fathoms nor more than 250 fathoms in length. A purse seine or hand purse seine may not exceed 325 [375] meshes in depth. Seine mesh may not be more than three and one-half inches, except that the first 25 meshes above the leadline may not be more than seven inches.

(b) A lead [LEADS] may not be [less than 50 fathoms nor] more than **100** [150] fathoms in length. **The aggregate length of seine and lead may not be more than 250 fathoms in length.** Only one lead may be used with a seine. [A LEAD MAY BE ATTACHED TO ONLY ONE END OF A SEINE, AND THE LEAD MAY NOT BE ATTACHED TO THE BOAT END OF THE SEINE.]

PRESENT SITUATION: A commercial purse seine may not be less than 100 fathoms or more than 250 fathoms in length and may not exceed 375 meshes in depth. Leads may not be less than 50 fathoms or more than 150 fathoms in length and only one lead may be used that is not attached to the boat end of the seine.

STAFF ASSESSMENT OF THE AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST:

- a) **Is there a fishery conservation purpose or reason?** No
- b) **Does the agenda change request correct an error in regulation?** No.
- c) **Does the agenda change request address an effect of a regulation on a fishery that was unforeseen when that regulation was adopted?** No.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Seine specification and operation of using purse seine gear that is between 100 and 250 fathoms and the use of leads that are 50 to 150 fathoms in length have been in regulation prior to 1985, However, regulations prior to 1992 did not require leads to be attached to the boat end of the purse seine and unlimited leads could be used in the Unimak District and Bear River Section of the Northern District. Use of purse seines that were up to 375 meshes deep have been in effect since before 1985.

PROPOSED BY: Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee.

ACR 11 – Prohibit discard of king salmon caught in purse seine gear in the Alaska Peninsula and Chignik areas (5 AAC 09.373 and 5 AAC 15.364).

WHAT THE AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST SEEKS TO CHANGE: Prohibit nonretention of king salmon 28 inches or greater caught by S01M and S01L Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC) permit holders from June 1 through October 31.

PRESENT SITUATION: From June 1 through October 31, all king salmon 28 inches or greater in length caught may not be retained and must be immediately returned to the water unharmed.

A permit holder shall retain all visibly injured or dead king salmon caught and record the injured or dead king salmon on an ADF&G fish ticket as described in 5 AAC 39.130(c).

STAFF ASSESSMENT OF THE AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST:

- a) **Is there a fishery conservation purpose or reason?** No
- b) **Does the agenda change request correct an error in regulation?** No.
- c) **Does the agenda change request address an effect of a regulation on a fishery that was unforeseen when that regulation was adopted?** No.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Due to concerns for Gulf of Alaska king salmon stocks, the department has taken unprecedented steps to conserve king salmon by restricting numerous commercial salmon fisheries in the Westward Region. Over the past several years these actions have included various king salmon harvest caps and nonretention of king salmon over 28” in length.

At the February 2026 Alaska Peninsula and Chignik Board of Fisheries meeting, the board adopted a regulation requiring nonretention all king salmon 28 inches or longer caught in purse-seine gear in the Alaska Peninsula and Chignik management areas and adopted a king salmon harvest cap as part of the *Chignik Area King Salmon Stock of Concern Management Plan*.

There is little data on the survival of king salmon released from purse seine gear in Alaska, but there are observations of tagged king salmon, released from purse seine gear, being later observed migrating through weirs or otherwise proceeding along their migratory journey. Requiring king salmon over 28 inches in length to be released has introduced bias into the department’s ongoing genetic stock identification study because only fish less than 28 inches in length are available to sample.

PROPOSED BY: Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee.

ACR 12 – Allow commercial fishing for salmon with set gillnet gear in the Southeastern District Mainland concurrent to commercial fishing periods for salmon in the Chignik Management Area (5 AAC 09.360).

WHAT THE AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST SEEKS TO CHANGE: Allow South Alaska Peninsula set gillnet permit holders to fish in the Southeastern District Mainland (SEDM) whenever Chignik Management Area (CMA) fishermen are permitted to fish.

PRESENT SITUATION: In accordance with 5 AAC 09.360(b) and (c), commercial salmon fishing opportunity in SEDM shall be curtailed to allow a commercial harvest in the CMA of at least 300,000 sockeye salmon through July 8. After July 8, if at least 300,000 sockeye salmon have been harvested in the CMA, and if escapement goals are being met, the department shall manage the SEDM fishery so that the number of sockeye salmon harvested in the CMA is at least 600,000 fish through July 25. As stated in 5 AAC 09.360(d), when the harvestable surplus is expected to be more than 600,000 sockeye salmon and the department determines that the runs are as strong as expected, the department will manage the SEDM so that harvest approaches as near as possible to 7.6% of sockeye salmon harvested in the CMA. From June 1 through July 25, 80% of sockeye salmon harvested in East Stepovak, Stepovak Flats, Southwest Stepovak, Balboa Bay, and Beaver Bay Sections and prior to July 1 in the Northwest Stepovak Section are considered Chignik bound (5 AAC 09.360(f)).

STAFF ASSESSMENT OF THE AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST:

- a) **Is there a fishery conservation purpose or reason?** No.
- b) **Does the agenda change request correct an error in regulation?** No.
- c) **Does the agenda change request address an effect of a regulation on a fishery that was unforeseen when that regulation was adopted?** No.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: In 1985, the Board of Fisheries (board) developed a management plan for SEDM based on the Kodiak Management Area (KMA) *Cape Igvak Salmon Management Plan* (5 AAC 18.360), which included CMA harvest thresholds and an allocation based on harvest of sockeye salmon in the CMA, Cape Igvak Section of the KMA, and in SEDM. This harvest allocation criterion has fluctuated between 6% and 7% since its introduction. Since then, the board has made modifications to the management plan including changes to the allocation of Chignik River system sockeye salmon stocks to the fishery and definition of local stocks. The most recent change occurred in 2007 when the board recalculated the allocation to 7.6% of sockeye salmon harvested in CMA. This removed the Cape Igvak sockeye salmon harvest component from the SEDM management plan allocation. Since then, the harvest of Chignik bound sockeye salmon has ranged from 0% to 9.7%.

PROPOSED BY: Ben Mobeck Sr.

ACR 13 – Establish a statewide King salmon retention and disposition reporting standard for commercial salmon fisheries. (5 AAC 39.130).

WHAT THE AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST SEEKS TO CHANGE: This seeks to prohibit nonretention of king salmon caught in a commercial salmon fishery and require that all king salmon caught in a commercial salmon fishery be retained and recorded on an ADF&G fish ticket in one of three ways: (1) sold, (2) donated to a nonprofit food bank, tribal or village entity, or charitable organization providing food distribution services, or (3) retained for personal use.

PRESENT SITUATION: Statewide regulations require all salmon caught and retained in a commercial salmon fishery that are sold or retained for a person's own use to be reported on an ADF&G fish ticket. Certain area-specific regulations have differing requirements for king salmon of certain sizes caught in a commercial fisheries (e.g. Southeast Alaska troll 28-inch minimum size limit), to promote conservation of king salmon or to meet provisions of the Pacific Salmon Treaty. In addition, in 2026 the Board of Fisheries (board) prohibited the retention of commercially caught king salmon in the Nushagak District for a person's own use. Lastly, the commissioner has authority to require retention of all salmon caught in a commercial salmon net fishery, for conservation purposes.

STAFF ASSESSMENT OF THE AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST:

- a) **Is there a fishery conservation purpose or reason?** No.
- b) **Does the agenda change request correct an error in regulation?** No.
- c) **Does the agenda change request address an effect of a regulation on a fishery that was unforeseen when that regulation was adopted?** No.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: This ACR seeks to amend 5 AAC 39.130, a regulation that does not fall under the board's authority, rather all authorities for 5 AAC 39.130 lie with the commissioner, although the issues raised by the ACR are within the board's authority.

There is a paucity of information on survival of king salmon released from commercial net gear in Alaska, but there is evidence that at least some of these fish do survive initial release and continue their migration. Data on survival of king salmon released from hook and line gear is more robust.

Requiring retention of all king salmon taken in Southeast Alaska commercial salmon fisheries will alter the age composition and potentially the stock composition of the catch. Per the terms of the Pacific Salmon Treaty, significant management changes that may alter the stock or age composition and incidental mortality of the all-gear harvest require discussion of the Pacific Salmon Commission before implementation. This also has the potential to alter impacts on stocks listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act that may affect the risk of exceeding take limits specified in the 2024 Southeast Alaska Biological Opinion.

PROPOSED BY: Bering Sea Fishermen's Association.