

**PROPOSAL 4 - 5 AAC 55.023. Special provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Prince William Sound Area.** Prohibit the release of king salmon in Prince William Sound, as follows:

General Seasons and Limits/Prince William Sound Salt Waters.

King Salmon bag limits add: **No catch and release of king salmon, first two caught must be kept.**

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** This proposal seeks to reduce hooking mortalities of king salmon in Western Prince William Sound by addressing the current catch and release practices of a growing number of participants.

With the decline of king salmon in other areas of the Kenai Peninsula, there is increased pressure in a specific area of Western Prince William Sound salt waters. With mortality associated with hook and release fishing, an unknown growing percentage of king salmon are not able to reach spawning grounds jeopardizing future stocks.

The quality of the resource harvested or products produced should improve as future stocks increase.

The resource, future king salmon returns and the users depending on the salmon resources for recreation and a living should benefit from this change. Those anglers that catch and release only to sift for trophy king salmon with no consideration to the detrimental effects their fishing practice is causing may suffer.

A catch and release mortality rate in these salt waters with the vast amount of predatory fish is immoral, if not criminal.

**PROPOSED BY:** Seward Charterboat Association (EF-C14-095)  
\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 5 - 5 AAC 55.023. Special provisions for seasons, bag limits, and methods and means for the Prince William Sound Area.** Close a portion of Main Bay to sport fishing, as follows:

Similar to 5 AAC 55.023(3) ... the waters of Main Bay inside Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) regulatory markers located approximately 100 feet seaward of the Main Bay Hatchery broodstock holding barrier net are closed to sport fishing;

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Main Bay Hatchery (MBH) is a state-owned ADF&G salmon hatchery managed and operated by the Prince William Sound Aquaculture Corporation (PWSAC) through a professional services agreement at no cost to the state. PWSAC installs and operates a barrier net approximately 400 feet seaward of the hatchery fish ladder between June 15 and July 31 each year. The barrier net functions as a weir allowing the hatchery operator to volitionally collect and hold returning MBH sockeye salmon broodstock prior to the brood's final migration into the fresh water brood holding pond via the hatchery fish

ladder. A growing sport fishery has developed targeting the MBH sockeye salmon as the fish concentrate on the seaward side of the barrier net (similar to the downstream side of a fresh water weir when upstream passage is prevented). The integrity of the barrier net has often been compromised (snagged and abandoned snagging hooks, boat anchors, etc.) and sport fishing inside of the brood holding area has occurred. Additionally, the number of injured fish resulting from attempted snagging has increased. These injured fish must be culled from broodstock to comply with ADF&G Sockeye Salmon Culture Protocol which results in a waste of the salmon resource.

**PROPOSED BY:** Prince William Sound Aquaculture Corporation (EF-C14-055)

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 6 - 5 AAC 55.023. Special provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Prince William Sound Area.** Prohibit the use of bait for salmon once the bag limit has been achieved on drainages crossed by the Copper River Highway, as follows:

Artificial tackle only when fishing for salmon for all fresh water drainages crossed by the Copper River Highway from and including the Eyak River to the Million Dollar Bridge, including Clear Creek (mile 42) when daily bag limit has been reached.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Although there may not be an apparent conservation concern, there has been a growing sociological concern from residents of Cordova regarding catch and release of salmon with bait. The major tributaries that are fished are primarily intertidal, and according to an Alaska Department of Fish and Game (department) study, catch and release mortality is dramatically increased up to 60% when using bait. This study was conducted on the Little Susitna River by the department. The study's conclusion was for coho release in the intertidal areas the mortality is very high, especially with a fishery with a high catch and release component. They also concluded that in such areas, catch and release may not be a viable management option. This proposal does not change bag limits or reduce opportunity, but addresses the social concerns that have been brewing for years by reducing mortality on a resource that is of great importance to the community of Cordova. Statistics are available from a July 2010 United States Forest Service study to show the catch and release numbers over a three-year period for the Copper River Delta. This information will give ideas of the numbers of fish that are released in these intertidal areas.

**PROPOSED BY:** Copper River/Prince William Sound Advisory Committee (HQ-F14-006)

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 7 - 5 AAC 55.033. Copper River Delta Special Management Area for Trout.** Modify the Copper River Delta Special Trout Management Area to allow retention of trout from June 15–April 14, as follows:

Copper River Delta Special Trout Management Area, in all fresh waters draining into the Gulf of Alaska south of Miles Glacier, east of the Copper River, and west of Cape Suckling, rainbow/steelhead and cutthroat, June 15–April 14, two per day, only one over 20". Only un-baited, single-hook, artificial lures are allowed year round.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** In the mid-90s, the Board of Fish at the request of this advisory committee established a special trout management area east of the Copper River. This was done to protect the most previous trout habitation the delta due to a private development of a road to a large coal deposit in the Bering River drainage. To this day the road has not been built. This area is very hard to access and even harder now that the Copper

River Highway is washed out. Harvest levels are extremely low. This proposal establishes similar bag limits found on the West Delta.

**PROPOSED BY:** Copper River/Prince William Sound Advisory Committee (HQ-F14-005)

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 8 - 5 AAC 55.022. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Prince William Sound Area.** Reduce bag and possession limit for lingcod in Prince William Sound Area from two per day, four in possession to one per day, two in possession, as follows:

For these reasons we respectfully request that the Board of Fisheries lower the existing bag limit for lingcod in Prince William Sound water as follows.

**One Lingcod per day with two in possession. Size limit of not less than 35" for a whole fish and not less than 28" with the head removed.**

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** The Seward Charterboat Association is deeply concerned about the abundance levels of lingcod in the waters of Prince William Sound.

Based on our observations on the grounds, it has become clear that populations of lingcod have declined sharply in the last several years. In addition to the difficulty in finding these fish, we are concerned that with the implementation of the Halibut Catch Share Plan, there will be motivation to make up for the lowered halibut bag limit by fully utilizing the two fish lingcod bag limit in Prince William Sound, causing even more pressure on the resource.

Our proposed changes would make enforcement easier, as the bag limit would effectively be one lingcod per person in any area along the entire North Gulf Coast, east from Gore Point to Kayak Island.

Being that lingcod are relatively fast grown and reach maturity in five years, we would like to revisit this issue in future board cycles to insure that the resource is healthy and may be adjusted upward to reflect improvement of condition of the stocks.

**PROPOSED BY:** Seward Charterboat Association (EF-C14-093)

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 9 - 5 AAC 55.023. Special provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Prince William Sound Area.** Allow an additional line to jig for bait when saltwater sport fishing in Prince William Sound, as follows:

Please add this section to the statewide general regulations or just for Prince William Sound chapter for sport fishing: (1) an additional line may be used to jig for herring and smelt as bait as specified in 5 AAC 75.030.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** We were cited by an overzealous Fish and Game trooper for having an extra line with eight herring hooks on it. We had no fish on the boat. We are allowed up to 15 hooks on a herring rig or two hooks on a halibut rig at one time but we are not allowed one hook on one line and eight herring hooks on the other at the same time. You have a bag limit for halibut anyway. You are not going to catch a halibut on a herring rig. With limited time to fish and limited fish to catch, you should be able to bait fish while you are halibut fishing.

**PROPOSED BY:** Michael Gott

(EF-C14-101)

\*\*\*\*\*