

**PROPOSAL 186 – 5 AAC 09.200. Description of districts and sections; and 5 AAC 09.XXX Dolgoi Island Section June Salmon Fisheries Management Plan.** Establish a Dolgoi Island Section and Dolgoi Island Section June Management Plan, as follows:

**(1) Dolgoi Island Area June Management** (a) In years when a harvestable surplus beyond escapement goals for the first and second runs of Chignik Rivers system sockeye salmon is expected to be more than 600,000 fish and the early run develops to where in the Chignik Area at least 300,000 early run sockeye salmon are expected to be available for harvest and surplus to escapement goals, the commissioner may establish commercial fishing periods in the Dolgoi Island Area (stat. areas: 283-15 thru 283-26 and 284-36 thru 284-42) as follows:

(1) beginning on June 7 commercial fishing periods will begin at 6:00 a.m. and run 66 hours until midnight two days later and then close for 54 hours and reopen at 6:00 a.m. three days later;

(2) notwithstanding (1) of this paragraph, the final commercial fishing period will end at midnight on June 27.

(b) In years when a harvestable surplus beyond escapement goals for the first and second runs of Chignik River sockeye salmon is expected to be less than 600,000, no June commercial salmon fishing shall occur in the Dolgoi Island Area until a harvest of 300,000 sockeye salmon in the Chignik Area is achieved. If the 300,000 has been achieved the commissioner may establish commercial fishing periods in the Dolgoi Island Area as follows:

(1) beginning on June 7 commercial fishing periods will begin at 6:00 a.m. and run 66 hours until midnight two days later and then close for 54 hours and reopen at 6:00 a.m. three days later;

(2) notwithstanding (1) of this paragraph, the final commercial fishing period will end at midnight on June 27.

(c) All terminal harvest areas as specified in regulation are excluded from (a) and (b) sections.

**(2) Dolgoi Island Area July 6-25 Management** (a) In years when a harvestable surplus beyond escapement goals for the first and second runs of Chignik River sockeye salmon is expected to be less than 600,000 there will be no commercial salmon fishing in the Dolgoi Island Area (stat. areas: 283-15 thru 283-26 and 284-36 thru 284-42) until a harvest of 300,000 sockeye salmon in the Chignik Area, as described in 5 AAC 15.100, is achieved. After July 8, after at least 300,000 sockeye salmon have been harvested in the Chignik Area, and provided escapement goals are being met, the department shall manage the Dolgoi Island Area fishery through July 25 so the number of sockeye salmon harvested in the Chignik Area will be at least 600,000. Subject to the above, the commissioner may establish, by emergency order, commercial fishing periods as follows:

(1) the first fishing period will begin at 6:00 a.m. and run 25 hours until 7:00 a.m. the following day; commercial fishing will then close for 71 hours and re-open under (2) of this subsection;

(2) following the closure under (1) of this section, commercial fishing periods will begin at 6:00 a.m. and run for 27 hours until 9:00 a.m. of the following day; commercial fishing will then close for 69 hours and re-open at 6:00 a.m. three days later.

(b) In years when a harvestable surplus beyond escapement goals for the first and second runs of Chignik River sockeye salmon is expected to be at least than 600,000 commercial salmon

in the Chignik Area and the department determines the runs are as strong as expected, the commissioner may establish, by emergency order, commercial fishing periods in the Dolgoi Island Area (stat. areas: 283-15 thru 283-26 and 284-36 thru 284-42) as follows:

(1) the first fishing period will begin at 6:00 a.m. and run 25 hours until 7:00 a.m. the following day; commercial fishing will then close for 71 hours and then reopen under (2) of this subsection;

(2) following the closure under (1) of this section, commercial fishing periods will begin at 6:00 a.m. and run for 27 hours until at 9:00 a.m. of the following day; commercial fishing will then close for 69 hours and re-open at 6:00 a.m. three days later.

(c) In years when a harvestable surplus beyond escapement goals for the first and second runs of Chignik River sockeye salmon is expected to be at least 600,000 and the first run fails to develop as predicted and it is determined that a total sockeye salmon harvest in the Chignik Area of 600,000 may not be achieved by July 25, commercial salmon fishing in the Dolgoi Island Area (stat. areas: 283-15 thru 283-26 and 284-36 thru 284-42) will be curtailed in order to allow a minimum harvest in the Chignik Area of at least 300,000 sockeye salmon. After July 8, after at least 300,000 sockeye salmon have been harvested in the Chignik Area, and provided escapement goals are being met, the department shall manage the Dolgoi Island Area fishery through July 25 so the number of sockeye salmon harvested in the Chignik Area will be at least 600,000. Subject to the above, the commissioner may establish, by emergency order, commercial fishing periods as follows:

(1) the first fishing period will begin at 6:00 a.m. and run 25 hours until 7:00 a.m. the following day; commercial fishing will then close for 71 hours and then reopen under (2) of this subsection;

(2) following the closure under (1) of this section, commercial fishing periods will begin at 6:00 a.m. and run for 27 hours until at 9:00 a.m. of the following day; commercial fishing will then close for 69 hours and re-open at 6:00 a.m. three days later.

(d) All terminal harvest areas as specified in regulation are excluded from (a), (b), and (c) sections.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** The Dolgoi Island Area supports a major June and post-June sockeye salmon interception fishery based on the three year WASSIP study (2006-08). Primarily intercepted are Chignik, East of Wassip (Kodiak/U. Cook Inlet), and Bristol Bay (BB) sockeye salmon. During the June fishery Chignik sockeye average 43% of the catch followed by East of WASSIP sockeye at 27% and BB at 25%. In Post June, the catch is dominated by Chignik sockeye at 51% and East of WASSIP sockeye at 43%. South Peninsula sockeye stocks average less than 1% of the June and post June Dolgoi Island catch.

The pre July 26<sup>th</sup> Dolgoi Island Area fishery is by no means insignificant. In the WASSIP years (2006-08) the sockeye catch averaged 20% of the terminal harvest in the Chignik Management Area. Further evidence is that the fishery operated in 2008, a year when both Igvak and SEDM fisheries were closed (June 1 through July 25) due to weak Chignik runs. Per the WASSIP study an estimated 40% of the pre-July 26<sup>th</sup> Dolgoi catch was Chignik bound sockeye salmon in that year. In 2014 while the SEDM and Igvak fisheries were closed due to failure of the Chignik early run and a weak Chignik late run, the Dolgoi Island Area was opened and a total of 280,000 sockeye salmon were harvested through July 25 of which more than 136,000 are estimated to be Chignik sockeye salmon. South Peninsula sockeye barely contributed at less than 3,000 fish.

A management plan for the Dolgoi Island Area that addresses non-local interception of sockeye salmon which comprise an estimated 99+ % of the catch and is dominated by Chignik-bound fish is warranted. A reasonable plan would be a modest reduction in fishing time starting in June and continuing through July 25, coupled with a limit on the fishery whenever Chignik sockeye numbers are weak to where a Dolgoi Island Area harvest would impact the BOF-assigned harvest threshold for Area L and/or cause Chignik escapement shortfalls. Such is well justified. The Dolgoi Island Area is the only area where in June and July the dominant stock is Chignik bound sockeye salmon that does not operate under a plan that recognizes annual variations in the strength of the two Chignik sockeye runs, Area L pre July 26<sup>th</sup> harvest preferences, and the Igvak and Southeast Mainland District allocations.

There is no justification to limit or reduce harvest opportunity on any local South Peninsula stocks including pink and chum salmon, and therefore no change in the terminal harvest areas or management thereof should occur nor is proposed.

**PROPOSED BY:** Chignik Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F15-033)

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