

PROPOSAL 101

5 AAC 05.310. Fishing seasons, and 5 AAC 05.369. Yukon River Coho Salmon Management Plan.

Open and close the commercial fishery for fall chum and coho salmon in the Yukon Area by emergency order, as follows:

5 AAC 05.310. Fishing seasons

Except as provided in 5 AAC 05.320 - 5 AAC 05.380, salmon may be taken only as follows:

(1) in Districts 1, 2, and 3, the commissioner shall open **and close** the season by emergency order [AND CLOSE THE SEASON ON OR BEFORE SEPTEMBER 1 AT 12:01 A.M. BY EMERGENCY ORDER];

(2) in District 4: except as specified in 5 AAC 05.369, in Subdistricts 4-A, 4-B, and 4-C, the commissioner shall open **and close** the season by emergency order [AND CLOSE THE SEASON ON OR BEFORE OCTOBER 1 AT 12:01 A.M. BY EMERGENCY ORDER];

(3) in District 5, in all subdistricts, the commissioner shall open **and close** the season by emergency order [AND CLOSE THE SEASON ON OR BEFORE OCTOBER 1 AT 12:01 A.M. BY EMERGENCY ORDER];

5 AAC 05.369. Yukon River Coho Salmon Management Plan

(e) In a year when a directed commercial coho salmon fishery is opened under this section in

(1) Districts 1, 2, and 3, the commissioner shall close [,BY EMERGENCY ORDER] the coho salmon fall season **by emergency order** [NO LATER THAN SEPTEMBER 10];

(2) Subdistrict 5-A, and Districts 4 and 6, the commissioner shall close [BY EMERGENCY ORDER,] the coho salmon fall season **by emergency order** [NO LATER THAN OCTOBER 5];

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Remove the set dates for closing the fall chum salmon and coho salmon fall season fisheries in all districts and subdistricts within the Yukon Area: Climate change is most likely responsible for alterations in environmental conditions and salmon migrations in many Alaskan rivers, including the Yukon River. In recent years, there has been a desire to fish later in the fall fishing season in some sections of the Yukon Area because of later running fall season salmon and also because of delayed ice formation on the river. However, both the fall chum and coho salmon fall season fisheries throughout the Yukon Area close by a set date in regulation, unless closed earlier by emergency order. Because salmon migrations, as well as environmental conditions, have been altered by climate change, we seek to remove all set closure dates for the fall season fisheries and recommend that the closures occur through emergency order.

Note that an emergency petition was accepted by the BOF and a proposal was generated for deliberation at the March 2018 statewide meeting that removed the October 1 closure date for the District 6 fall season fishery, **5 AAC 05.310 (4)**. This proposal was passed unanimously by the BOF at this meeting. The basic rationale for removing the set dates for the all other Yukon fall seasons fisheries is similar. This proposal, with the suggested language, replaces the set closure date for all fall season fisheries throughout the Yukon Area with a closure specified by emergency order. If nothing is done, an emergency regulation may be requested in several years to extend the fisheries beyond the closure date in several districts and/or subdistrict fall season fisheries. The removal of the set date in lieu of closing the seasons by emergency order is not anticipated to have

any negative effects on the commercial or the subsistence fisheries. Additionally, it would allow the department more control of the termination of the fall season fisheries within the Alaskan portion of the Yukon River Drainage. This would benefit the commercial fishers of the Yukon Area by allowing them to fish longer and possibly harvest more fish during the fall season fisheries.

PROPOSED BY: Yukon Delta Fisheries Development Association (HQ-F18-079)
