

PROPOSAL 56

5 AAC 67.022. Special provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means in the Bristol Bay Area.

Prohibit chumming by guides and other commercial users in portions of the Naknek River drainage sport fishery, as follows:

5 AAC 67.022 (d) (XXX).

Naknek River Drainage:

All waters of the Naknek River watershed closed to chumming including the Naknek River main stem, Pauls Creek, King Salmon Creek, Smelt Creek and Big Creek, and all of Naknek Lake and its tributaries. Applies to guided, self-guided, boat rentals, and those transported by commercial entities.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? We would like to address the issue of “chumming” on the Naknek River and its tributaries. Cleaning your daily catch and disposing of the entrails is one thing but targeting a species in an attempt to increase an angler’s odds is both unnatural and defies all avenues of fair chase for sport fish. Any attempt to lure fish to a designated area by chumming should not be allowed. We must not alter our fish’s natural predatory instincts on the Naknek River. The Naknek River has been an artificial lure or fly only river for many years since the elimination of bait. Chumming is in many ways like using bait to target fish, especially rainbow trout, which are easily lured in by fish entrails and eggs.

What will happen if nothing is done? If nothing is done the rainbow trout of the Naknek will suffer the most. This river is world renown as a premier destination for wild rainbows, and chumming should have no part in that. The mortality rate of these fragile fish will go up, because they are more prone to swallow hooks or flies when they are lured in by chumming, especially with eggs. Chumming with salmon eggs frequently causes rainbow trout to go into feeding frenzies, and the fish become far less cautious, increasing the likelihood of them taking an artificial lure, and swallowing it, getting it caught in their gills eye or some other part that could prove fatal. Fish in certain areas may even become accustomed to being fed. The regulation would help ensure healthy populations of rainbow trout in the future.

PROPOSED BY: Naknek/Kvichak Fish and Game Advisory Committee (EF-F18-081)
