

PROPOSAL 235

5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan.

Create a lower Susitna River personal use dip net fishery, as follows:

5 AAC 77.540(h) (new section).

(h) In the Susitna River, salmon may be taken by dip net only as follows:

(1) from July 10 through August 31, seven days per week, from 6:00 am to 11:00 pm;

(2) the annual limit is as specified in 5 AAC 77.525, except that no king salmon larger than 28 inches may be retained;

(3) from a boat or shore, in those waters from an ADF&G regulatory marker located at the confluence of the Susitna and Yentna Rivers downstream to at the power line crossing the Susitna River.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Open a personal use fishery in the lower Susitna River.

ADF&G has in-river data showing multiple salmon species returning to the Susitna River, implying that additional access is necessary. The opening dates can avoid the returning king salmon in June. Any king netted in July-August will most likely be a small jack.

The valley population has expanded to 150% over the census taken in 2000. The fishing populations harvesting from the few local personal use fisheries available in the Valley puts burdens on these small fisheries, as well as the Kenai River and other Cook Inlet fisheries.

The lower Susitna River has relatively easy access for a personal use fishery downstream of the confluence of the Yentna and Susitna Rivers. There is a gravel bar suitable for landing an airplane and for fishing from shore near the Susitna-Yentna confluence.

A side effect of this fishery in the Valley will be fewer vehicles driving the Seward Highway, which was designated as a Safety Corridor in May, 2006. Safety Corridors have been identified as having higher than average incidences of crashes causing serious injuries and fatalities.

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(EF-F19-059)
