

PROPOSAL 215

5 AAC 21.358 Northern District Salmon Management Plan.

Provide additional commercial fishing opportunity for salmon within the *Northern District Salmon Management Plan* as follows:

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(b) the department shall manage Northern District commercial salmon fisheries based on the abundance of sockeye salmon through weirs on Larson, Chalatna, and Judd Lakes or other salmon abundance indices as the department deem appropriate.

9 (c) Open Northern District statistical areas Trading Bay 247-10 and Tyonek 247-20 from 7am to 7pm for one additional period between July 4 and 14. Opening date to be determined by ADF&G commercial fishing biologists.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The first three Sockeye periods in the Tyonek/Trading Bay statistical areas have a limited catch of Sockeye and very few Chinook salmon. Every year between July 4-14 there is a considerable run of Beluga River/Coal Lakes Sockeye. The natal philopatry is self-evident to commercial fishermen north and south of the Beluga River. Those to the north see few if any Sockeye until July 14. Kenai tenders do not even head north of the Beluga, but service the south each period. Those south of the Beluga see limited catches during the first three periods and then from July 4-14 one good period before the Susitna run begins. In terms of catch numbers, the fishing goes from 100-200 fish to 800 or more and then back down to the 100-200 level. If nothing is changed, this run will continue to be hit or miss. This proposal would grant a reasonable opportunity to a dozen permit holders in this limited area to harvest a specific commercial species. This proposal will not impact Chinook, Sockeye, or Coho sports fisheries. High quality will be maintained with available slush-ice on anchored scows in place, so an additional period is not a problem for tendering from Kenai. Tenders carrying iced catches could head to Kenai on the ebb, then next day head north to the Tyonek area on the flood tide. This proposal will aid the economic viability to the Tyonek/Granite Point area during a time when we have been limited or closed for Chinook and have greatly reduced fishing time on Susitna Sockeye.

Other solutions considered would be a Wednesday Sockeye opening for the entire Northern District during the Sockeye season.

PROPOSED BY: Terry Jorgensen and Kevin Barksdale

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