

**PROPOSAL 238**

**5 AAC 60.122. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Knik Arm Drainages Area.**

Establish a motor size restriction for the Little Susitna River as follows:

Establish a motor size restriction for the Little Susitna River that is similar to the one used on the Kenai River. The exact size of that limit is a separate and complicated discussion, but the need for restriction is clear.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Boats with big motors cause excessive erosion on the Little Susitna River, and this is a major fish habitat issue. There are motor size restrictions on other fisheries in the State, most notably the Kenai River.

I am a bank fisherman. I fish the Little Susitna at the Burma campground a lot, so I know the river well. Over the last 10 years I have averaged fishing there 46 times and averaged fishing 195 hours per year in that river!

There is a cute informational sign on the walking path just down the trail from the main parking lot by the boat launch. This sign informs bank fishermen to be careful while fishing along the bank of the river, so that we do not cause bank erosion to critical salmon spawning habitat. I now laugh at this sign when I see it because I have watched over the years how much erosion every motorized watercraft causes every day of the fishing season. It is not the few bank fishermen who are causing the majority of the habitat erosion on this river, it is the boats!

There are many types of watercraft used on the Little Susitna River. I have seen everything from jet skis to Air Boats. The most common types of boats are flat river boats with 100 (approximate) horsepower motors. But there are also bigger boats with larger motors. The worst boats, for erosion of fish habitat, are the small jet boats with inboard motors in excess of 200 horsepower. The wake and erosion that these larger, faster, more powerful boats create is excessive. The wake size and erosion is better appreciated when you are standing in the water as the boats pass you.

I do not use a boat to sport fish, and I do not profess to be an expert on boat and motor size. I just feel strongly that there needs to be an established limit on motor size on the Little Susitna River. We have restrictions like this on other lakes and rivers across the State. A few years ago the Board of Fish approved a proposal to limit the use of 2-stroke motors on the Little Susitna River. It is time to address motor size for this popular boat dominated fishery.

**PROPOSED BY:** Daniel D Page

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