

PROPOSAL 34

5 AAC 21.3XX. NEW SECTION.

Create a Kamishak Bay Purse Seine Fishery Management Plan as follows:

CREATE The Kamishak Bay Purse Seine Fishery Management Plan to structure guidelines in regulation to ensure wild fish priority in mixed stock fisheries to surrounding river systems

5 AAC 21.3XX. Kamishak Bay Purse Seine Fishery Management Plan.

(a) The purpose of this management plan is to ensure adequate escapement and a sustainable harvestable surplus of salmon into the Kamishak District drainages. This plan would acknowledge ecosystem management guidelines to the department to provide for other uses especially the McNeil River State Game Sanctuary and Refuge. The department shall manage the commercial purse seine fishery to minimize the mixed stock harvest of Kamishak District salmon to provide robust escapements and to provide a buffer to rivers in the Kamishak area.

The department shall manage the Kamishak District commercial purse seine fishery as described in this section.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The McNeil River chum salmon has been a stock of concern since 2016. In 2022, the Kamishak Districts McNeil, Bruin, and Ursus Cove rivers are all low or below sustainable escapement goals (SEG). Pink salmon are also below SEG ranges in all three Kamishak Bay index systems, (Bruin River, Sunday, and Brown's Peak creeks). Sockeye salmon escapement to Mikfik Lake was below the minimum SEG.

ADFG Emergency Orders have been diligent to close the Paint River and adjoining McNeil River subdistrict stock of concern, however, EO's are also used to open areas drawing fishermen into these areas that may not realize conservation concern. A management Plan will give this area a base structure with guidelines to protect wild salmon populations. Chum harvest is erratic ranging from over 177,000 in 2004, 70,000 in 2010, 30,000 two out of the last five years. A regulatory Management Plan can create a guide between the public and the department. Harvests especially near SHA's overlap run timing between species and needs to be in regulation to protect wild salmon masked in mixed stocks.

Enhancement has exacerbated mixed stock fisheries. The Bruin Bay Subdistrict where many of these systems are below SEG, contains the Kirshner Lake hatchery SHA 249-72. Sockeye from the Trail Lakes Hatchery are remotely stocked in this lake primarily for an Exclusive CIAA corporate cost recovery. fishery. This area requires otolith sampling, evaluation, and guidelines in regulation to ensure wild fish priority to surrounding river systems. There is very little oversight in these areas and often fishers work in tandem to increase harvest.

The Paint River subdistrict contains a fish ladder immediately adjacent to McNeil River. Attempted enhanced stocking of various species since 1991 has met with little success. However, Paint subdistrict blocks McNeil 249-52 and is another potential of interception requiring preventative guidelines in regulation to prevent interception on wild systems especially McNeil

stock of concern. Since Annual Management Reports have been severely curtailed of content, A Management Plan can document managers knowledge of this area for future staff.

PROPOSED BY: Pioneer Alaskan Fisheries Inc.

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