

Submitted  
by UCIDA

RC 089

Summary of Department Positions for the 2008 Upper Cook Inlet Proposals (Continued)			
Proposal No.	Dept. Position	Issue	Page No.
118	N	Return to 1996 Kenai River sockeye plan	97
119	O	Identify Susitna River and Fish Creek as stocks with a yield concern under the Sustainable Salmon Policy and create conservation corridor	33
120	O	Designate Cook Inlet chum salmon as a Stock of Concern	34
121	NA	Increase the Yentna/Susitna escapement goals	45
122	NA	Increase the Yentna/Susitna escapement goals	46
123	NA	Eliminate Fish Creek stocking program until escapement goal met	60
124	N	Reorganize the Upper Cook Inlet Management plans by species	62
125	N	Revise the Upper Cook Inlet area management plans to address quality, sustainability and revitalize the industry	74
126	N	Amend the Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plan to clarify board intent regarding the commissioner's emergency order authority	63
127	N/S	Authorize the commissioner to issue EO openings to ensure escapement ranges are met	64
128	N/S	Clarify the intention to manage fisheries in season to meet the escapement goals	65
129	N/S	Clarify the BOF intent that achieving escapement goals supersedes specific time and area managers flexibility	66
130	N/S	Clarify that achieving the established escapement goals is the primary management objective in the Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management plan	67
131	N/S	Manage to achieve in-river goals	68
132	N/O	Implement priorities among salmon management plans for Upper Cook Inlet	69
133	N	Specify from June 20 to August 20, Upper Cook Inlet salmon stocks will be primarily managed for high quality	75
134	N	Delete portions of Northern District management plan	47
135	N	Amend Northern District salmon management plan	48
136	N/S	Direct department to manage chum, pink, and sockeye salmon primarily for commercial uses	49
137	N/S	Eliminate the regulatory language from plans that direct the department to minimize harvest of Northern District and Kenai River coho in order to provide personal use, sport	50
138	N/O	Reinstate the pre-2005 Northern District Salmon Management Plan	52
139	O	Close commercial fishing to protect Alexander Creek stocks	53
140	N	Clarify escapement goal priorities regarding the Yentna and Kenai rivers	54
141	N	Allow longer sockeye season in Northern District	55
142	N	Allow additional coho fishing time after August 10 in Northern District	56
143	N	Manage Northern District Eastern Subdistrict by regular periods not tied to Yentna River escapement	57
144	N	Allow the commissioner to selectively close specific statistical areas in the Northern District commercial salmon fishery	58
145	N	Manage the east side of the Northern District independently	59
146	N	Remove reference to specific commercial fishing periods in the Northern District King Salmon Management Plan	38
147	N	Add Thursday to the allowed king salmon fishing periods in the Northern District	39
148	N	Increase maximum king salmon net length mesh size in the Northern District	41
149	N	Allow additional fishing time for the area located one mile south of the Theodore River to the Susitna River	43
150	N	Modify fishing periods in the Northern District	40
151	N	Allow drift gillnets during May and June in west side fishery	44
152	N	Modify the plan to provide for the following:	36
153	S	Define the pink salmon commercial fishing area in UCI	86
154	N	Allow earlier and more fishing periods for pink salmon harvest and delete permit requirements	86
155	N	Allow set gillnet use for harvesting pink salmon	87
156	N	Add set and drift gillnet opportunities to harvest pink salmon	88

N = Neutral; S = Support; O = Oppose; NA = No Action

**PROPOSAL 119: 5 AAC 39.222. Policy for the management of sustainable salmon fisheries; 5 AAC 21.358. Northern District Salmon Management Plan; and 5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan.**

**PROPOSED BY:** Bruce Knowles

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?** This proposal would identify Susitna River and Fish Creek sockeye salmon as stocks with a yield concern under the Policy for Management of Sustainable Salmon and create a conservation corridor for the drift fleet.

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?** The escapement goal for Fish Creek is 20,000 to 70,000 sockeye salmon. The escapement goal for Yentna River is 90,000 to 160,000 sockeye salmon. Achievement of the lower end of the Yentna River optimal escapement goal shall take priority over not exceeding the upper end of the Kenai River escapement goal. When the sockeye salmon returns to the Kenai River are four million or greater, the optimal escapement goal is 75,000 to 180,000 sockeye salmon in the Yentna River.

The purpose of the Northern District management plan is to minimize the harvest of coho salmon bound for the Northern District of upper Cook Inlet and to provide the department direction for management of salmon stocks. The department shall manage the chum, pink, and sockeye salmon stocks primarily for commercial uses to provide commercial fisherman with an economic yield from the harvest of these salmon resources based on abundance. The department shall also manage the chum, pink, and sockeye salmon stocks to minimize the harvest of Northern District coho salmon, to provide sport and guided sport fisherman a reasonable opportunity to harvest these salmon resources over the entire run, as measured by the frequency of inriver restrictions, or as specified in this section and other regulations.

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED?** This proposal would result in the department creating an action plan and presenting it to the board for consideration. Effects would depend what restrictions or other actions the BOF implemented.

**BACKGROUND:** There are no stocks designated as a yield concern in Cook Inlet nor is the department recommending any. The Fish Creek sockeye salmon goal has been exceeded twice, within three times, and below once in the last 6 years. The Yentna River sockeye salmon goal has been exceeded once, within once, and below four times in the last 6 years. Since the last Board of Fisheries meeting, the department has used a suite of restrictions and closures of the drift fleet and Northern Cook Inlet set netters in endeavoring to achieve escapement goals in Northern Cook Inlet.

The department is just completing the second year of a three year tagging study in the Susitna River drainage to estimate total sockeye salmon spawner abundance. In addition, we are operating a series of weirs and conducting lake studies to ascertain if and where production is changing. The department also has conducted a three year genetics study to

delineate the harvest in the commercial fishery of these stocks. Results from all of these programs are not yet available, but will be by the BOF meeting in February. In Fish Creek, 70-80 percent of the return each year is of hatchery origin. Even the survival of these hatchery fish is far lower than normal.

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. Neither Fish Creek nor the Yentna River sockeye salmon stocks meets the criteria in 5 AAC 39.222 to consider them stocks of concern.

**COST STATEMENT:** The department does not believe that approval of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

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**PROPOSAL 120: 5 AAC 39.222. Policy for the management of sustainable salmon fisheries.**

**PROPOSED BY:** Kenai River Sportfishing Association

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?** This proposal would designate Cook Inlet chum salmon as a Stock of Concern.

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?** The purpose of the Northern District management plan is to minimize the harvest of coho salmon bound for the Northern District of upper Cook Inlet and to provide the department direction for management of salmon stocks. The department shall manage the chum, pink, and sockeye salmon stocks primarily for commercial uses to provide commercial fisherman with an economic yield from the harvest of these salmon resources based on abundance. The department shall also manage the chum, pink, and sockeye salmon stocks to minimize the harvest of Northern District coho salmon, to provide sport and guided sport fisherman a reasonable opportunity to harvest these salmon resources over the entire run, as measured by the frequency of inriver restrictions, or as specified in this section and other regulations.

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ADOPTED?** This proposal would result in the department creating an action plan and presenting it to the board for consideration. Effects would depend what restrictions or other actions the BOF implemented.

**BACKGROUND:** This proposal has been before the BOF at each of the last four meetings and been rejected. In 2001 and 2002 the department conducted a tagging study in the lower inlet to estimate the number of pink, chum and coho salmon returning to UCI. Results of that study indicated the exploitation rate in the commercial fishery of chum salmon was approximately 6 percent. Acceptable exploitation rates are in the 60-70 percent range. With this low exploitation rate, commercial harvest rates are not an issue. In addition the only stream with an established escapement goal is Clearwater Creek. There is generally no fishery on this stock until the escapement goal is achieved and the escapement goal has been consistently met or exceeded.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. The Clearwater Creek chum salmon stock does not meet the criteria in 5 AAC 39.222 to consider it a stock of concern. Chum stocks in the remainder of Cook Inlet are relatively healthy.

COST STATEMENT: The department does not believe that approval of this proposal would result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

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Table 2 Historic Yentna Escapement Data from ADF&G data and reports									
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
	Original		Upper End	DIDSON	Escapement	DIDSON	Escapement	Average	
	Bendix		of	Adjusted for	Goal	Adjusted	Goal	Goal	
	Escapement	DIDSON	Escapement	Fish Wheel	Exceeded	for	Exceeded	Exceeded	
Year	Number	Equivalent*	Goal	Selectivity	Percentage	Mark/Recapture	Percentage	Number	
1982	113,847	253,982	100,000	667,733	568%	523,203	423%	495,468	
1983	104,414	210,105	100,000	323,461	223%	432,816	333%	278,139	
1984	149,375	298,383	100,000	773,450	673%	614,669	515%	594,059	
1985	107,124	211,806	100,000	417,147	317%	436,320	336%	326,734	
1986	92,076	169,048	150,000	974,513	550%	348,239	132%	511,376	
1987	66,054	130,040	150,000	291,897	95%	267,882	79%	129,890	
1988	52,330	101,854	150,000	286,421	91%	209,819	40%	98,120	
1989	96,269	189,554	150,000	491,489	228%	390,481	160%	290,985	
1990	140,290	259,729	150,000	682,631	355%	535,042	257%	458,836	
1991	109,632	217,158	150,000	347,900	132%	447,345	198%	247,623	
1992	66,074	130,966	150,000	463,272	209%	269,790	80%	216,531	
1993	141,694	282,837	150,000	593,576	296%	582,644	288%	438,110	
1994	128,032	251,856	150,000	413,317	176%	518,823	246%	316,070	
1995	121,220	232,856	150,000	416,842	178%	479,683	220%	298,263	
1996	90,660	172,882	150,000	308,169	105%	356,137	137%	182,153	
1997	157,822	308,949	150,000	379,445	153%	636,435	324%	357,940	
1998	119,623	211,500	150,000	445,538	197%	435,690	190%	290,614	
1999	99,029	186,981	150,000	280,900	87%	385,181	157%	183,040	
2000	133,094	291,848	150,000	409,266	173%	601,207	301%	355,236	
2001	83,532	153,847	150,000	376,228	151%	316,925	111%	196,576	
2002	78,591	158,564	160,000	479,228	200%	326,642	104%	242,935	
2003	180,813	344,224	160,000	609,591	281%	709,101	343%	499,346	
2004	71,281	142,187	160,000	347,900	117%	292,905	83%	160,403	
2005	36,921	71,264	160,000	131,541	-18%	146,804	-8%		
2006	92,051	166,697	160,000	390,567	144%	343,396	115%	206,981	
2007	79,901	125,146	160,000	206,146	29%	257,801	61%	71,973	
2008	90,146	131,772	160,000	252,804	58%	271,450	70%	102,127	
Average	103,774	200,224		435,592	214%	412,460	196%		
							Total fish over goal	7,549,530	
							Total weight	45,297,178	
							Loss of direct revenue	\$45.000 million	

\* Actual DIDSON counts used for 2006-2008