

Repeal Drift fishery 1% Rule    Oppose further drift restrictions in August  
 Proposals 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97

- Since the previous deliberations on Group 4, data on sport fish exploitation of northern coho has been clarified by Sam Ivey, ADF&G. According to Mr. Ivey, total coho sportfishery exploitation, compared to the total northern Cook Inlet coho return, is 8-12 %.
- Commercial catches in August are extremely important to processors, fishermen and local economies. As stated in public testimony, August harvest is frequently the profit period for whole the season. Commercial fishing effort is greatly reduced in August.
- Referring to the Little Susitna River coho escapement Table included with Proposal 94 in the Proposal Book:
  - The Little Susitna River coho escapement goal has been met or exceeded in 81% of the years since 1990.
  - As restrictions on the drift fishery increased with the 2008, 2011 and 2014 BOF meetings, coho escapements actually declined. This inverse relationship between commercial harvest and escapements indicates that harvest is not a causal factor.
- Most Susitna, Little Susitna and Knik coho have already passed through the Central District by August.
- The genetic coho stock report (5J17-03) consistently reports that drift fleet harvest of coho is predominantly of Northwest Cook Inlet/Yentna stocks.
- Drift harvest of Kenai coho is negligible at less than 1%.
- In 2015, during the first 13 days of August, the drift fishery had 6 full district-wide openings to target excess Kenai River sockeye. The Sport Division AMR for 2015 reported that the Little Susitna River coho harvest rates were average to above average (p29) and the daily bag limit was increased to 3 fish. The report went on to say “Coho salmon runs on the Little Susitna River have been found to be significantly correlated to other Knik arm streams” (p.29) Coho salmon runs to Knik Arm were above average in 2015 with the exception of Wasilla Creek Drainage. Fishing success was excellent for the duration of the season, with the exception of Jim Creek which was sporadic. Fish Creek made the escapement goal for coho salmon on 8 August”... and the bag limit was increased. (p31-32)
  - Jim Creek has such intense effort and is so affected by urbanization issues that it should categorically not be used as a coho index.