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Our Culture Unites Us; Our Land Sustains Us; Our People are Prosperous

October 4, 2017

Boards Support Section
 Alaska Board of Fisheries
 P.O. Box 115526
 Juneau, AK 99811-5526

To the members of the Alaska Board of Fisheries:

Ahtna Native C& Users are concerned about changing the Sustainable Escapement Goal (SEG) for King Salmon in the Copper River to a range of 18,500 to 33,000. Decreasing the lower range number 24,000 to 18,500 will be harmful to sustainable to the run strength and return for Copper River - King Salmon.

Spawning escapement goal should be changed back to 2002 SEG range of 28,000 – 55,000 to keep King Salmon sustainable and run strength healthy. Lowering SEG to 18,500 will be detrimental to keeping Copper River King Salmon sustainable. Over harvest by commercial fisheries, Personal Use Fisheries and Subsistence Fisheries will lower King Salmon returns to spawning grounds in the Upper Copper River.

Consider what happened in RY2017, subsistence fisheries was restricted from fishing until June 1st, due to in-accurate and unreliable fisheries data provided by data from Alaska Department of Fish and Game. SEG is a best guess-estimate for King Salmon in the Copper River, a conservative approach to manage Copper River King Salmon fisheries is imperative to keep this fisheries healthy and sustainable.

Sincerely,

Eleanor Dementi
 for Eleanor Dementi
 Eleanor Dementi, Chair