

PROPOSAL 74

5 AAC 18.362. Westside Kodiak Salmon Management Plan.

Close waters within 500 yards of the terminus of the Ayakulik River to commercial salmon fishing June 10–July 15, as follows:

No commercial salmon fishing within 500 yard radius of terminus of Ayakulik River from June 10 to July 15th.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? I would like to address the issue of King salmon bycatch during commercial salmon fisheries on the inner Ayakulik district.

Currently the only King salmon conservation measures in effect on the fishing grounds on the inner Ayakulik district is "non retention" of any king salmon over 28 inches. Currently there are no commercial fishing markers of any kind in the immediate vicinity of the Ayakulik stream terminus. This is unique in a bad way to the Ayakulik River in the Kodiak management area. It promotes a lackadaisical and take no account for our actions style of salmon management by staff. It allows for a single seiner to effectively block off the whole mouth of the river at any given stage of the tide to catch ALL salmon, not just sockeye, the main target species. It also allows staff to conveniently allow a single emergency order power to govern all management actions for salmon stocks on the inner Ayakulik. There are no check mates here, like commercial fishery markers or closed areas, nothing. Just a complete and utter free and structureless management regime.

Because there is no buffer zone of any kind, king salmon stand very little chance of making it upriver to spawn. This particular salmon stock is already in dire straits with stock of concern status and no visible effort to aid their cause. Fish and Game needs to be accountable for their actions and make an effort to address all salmon stocks in the archipelago, not just the most economically viable one, sockeye, at the expense of all others. If any given commercial opener on the inner Ayakulik were to be fished with a 500 yard radius buffer zone it would not lessen the desired effect of a "Mopup fishery" targeting excess sockeye, while giving king salmon somewhat of a chance to make it upriver and spawn, lessening the rate at which they are going extinct.

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