

PROPOSAL 279

5 AAC 01.280. Subsistence fishing permits.

Extend Kuskokwim River subsistence salmon fishing permit sunset date one year, as follows:

5 AAC 01.280(2) is amended to read:

...

(2) the provisions of (1) of this section do not apply after December 31, 2022 [2021].

...

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?

Since 2010, king salmon returns to the Kuskokwim River have been below historical averages and some of the lowest on record. These low returns have prompted management restrictions to the Kuskokwim River subsistence salmon fishery. At the August 2015 Kuskokwim Subsistence Salmon Panel meeting (panel) in Bethel, the panel heard testimony from panel members in support of a limited permit system that would allow for the harvest of king salmon during times of conservation.

The Alaska Board of Fisheries (board) met in Anchorage from March 20–24, 2017 to discuss proposals relating to subsistence fishing permits within the Kuskokwim River. The board adopted Proposal 276, establishing a limited permit system in Kuskokwim River waters from the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge boundary at Aniak upstream to the headwaters of the Kuskokwim River. The proposal included a sunset date of December 31, 2021.

The COVID-19 global pandemic shifted the normal Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim Alaska Board of Fisheries finfish meeting from January 2022 to January 2023. Therefore, this permit system will expire prior to the regular board meeting, eliminating permits as a management option during years of low king salmon abundance.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game. *(formerly known as ACR #3)*
