

On Apr 21, 2023, at 12:43 PM, Norm Darch <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Senator Giessel,

I am writing to you in opposition to SB82 - Cook Inlet: New Admin Area; Permit Buyback Bill. My family and I have a setnet business in Cook Inlet. I am very concerned about many of the aspects of this bill and the stated reasons and goals. The issues are many and too complicated to get into much detail here so I will comment on the specific issues within the Sponsors Statement.

The current situation in Cook Inlet regarding the East Side Setnet Fishery (ESSN) is a result of the current management plans developed through the board of fish process. Since 2012 there have been many compromises aimed at reducing the ESSN harvest of King Salmon. Many of these proposals, pushed by the same people trying to get SB82 passed, have been implemented into the management plans and have resulted in severe restrictions in both time and gear for our businesses. Last season we were closed early for harvesting 32 large kings and this season we are closed before it even starts.

The following points you should be aware of:

- Due to current management plans we have already seen a two-thirds reduction in the amount of fishing gear. Are we really going to further reduce the amount of gear by another 40-50%?
- The escapement goals are yield based goals.
  - Currently there is no management for staying within the upper range of the escapement goal for Sockeye which will undoubtedly lead to less fish in the future for harvest.
  - The current King Salmon goal is a large fish goal (750mm MEF). Small fish are not being counted.
    - Chinook sizes are on the decrease statewide and along the Pacific coast making this large fish goal even more problematic.
- "In the 1980's there was a migration of setnet fishermen to the east side of Cook Inlet."
  - While true, it was also most likely due to the expansion of operations that were fishing there at the time.
  - One of the main reasons for this bill is to get the areas closest to the rivers back to the way it was in the late 1980's....by reducing the amount of gear out in front of them and making sure it can never be infilled again.

It is flawed logic that says the remaining setnet fishermen will have a more viable fishery. There is nothing in the bill which provides for that. It would also require significant changes to the management plan. Further reduction of the ESSN fishery, 80% which are Alaskan, takes a major tool away from ADFG to control escapement leading to decreased yields in the future, jeopardizing the future of any remaining fishermen as well as the processing sector. This bill will kill Alaskan Jobs. There are solutions but this is not it.

Respectfully,

Norm Darch  
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