

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
SENATE
RESOURCES STANDING COMMITTEE**

March 24, 2014

3:30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Cathy Giessel, Chair
Senator Fred Dyson, Vice Chair
Senator Peter Micciche
Senator Click Bishop
Senator Anna Fairclough
Senator Hollis French

MEMBERS ABSENT

Senator Lesil McGuire

OTHER LEGISLATORS PRESENT

Senator Mike Dunleavy

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Dialogue

- HEARD

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

No previous action to record

WITNESS REGISTER

RICK KOCH, City Manager
City of Kenai, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Related issues the City of Kenai deals with during its personal use fishery.

BRIAN GABRIEL, member
Kenai City Council
Kenai, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Present to answer questions of City of Kenai fish issues.

BRUCE KNOWLES, Chairman

Matanuska-Susitna Borough Fish and Wildlife Commission

POSITION STATEMENT: Gave a presentation on Northern Cook Inlet fisheries.

ANDY SZCZESNY, member

Kenai River Professional Guides Association
Soldotna, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Commented on the economic impact of sport fishing on the Kenai Peninsula.

DWIGHT KRAMER, Chairman

Kenai Area Fishermen's Coalition
Kenai, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Commented on Upper Cook Inlet king salmon stock issues.

ROD ARNO, Executive Director

Alaska Outdoor Council (AOC)
Palmer, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Commented on Upper Cook Inlet salmon management issues.

MEGAN SMITH, member

Kenai Peninsula Fishermen's Association (KPFA)

POSITION STATEMENT: Discussed setnetting issues in Upper Cook Inlet.

AMBER EVERY, member

Kenai Peninsula Fishermen's Association

POSITION STATEMENT: Discussed setnetting issues in Upper Cook Inlet.

ACTION NARRATIVE

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CHAIR CATHY GIESSEL called the Senate Resources Standing Committee meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. Present at the call to order were Senators Micciche, Bishop, Dyson, Fairclough, and Chair Giessel.

Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Dialogue

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CHAIR GIESSEL said the committee would take up its only order of business today, the "Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Dialogue." Her intention was informational only.

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RICK KOCH, City Manager, City of Kenai, Alaska, introduced himself and said he hoped the City of Kenai would always be a "fishing town" as it is now. They are proud of the responsible stewardship that generations of Kenai Peninsula residents have undertaken as a solemn trust.

BRIAN GABRIEL, member, Kenai City Council, Kenai, Alaska, introduced himself.

MR. KOCH said that subsistence, commercially-guided sportfish, sportfish, commercial shore (setnet), commercially-guided personal use, and personal use fisheries all occur on lands within the corporate boundary of the City of Kenai and almost exclusively on or over lands owned by the City. The City is also homeport to many commercial drift operators and fish processing facilities. As defined in Section 104.297 of the Magnuson Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, the City of Kenai is a fishing community, and at least under federal law, is mandated to have a seat at the table when decisions affecting the community are contemplated.

He said he was invited to speak today and wanted to show them some pictures and tell a few stories, and leave them with a few fisheries issues that the City of Kenai faces.

The first slide was a picture of a typical day during a personal use fishery at the mouth of the Kenai River. Last year there were 15,000 people on the north and south shores during the busiest day of the fishery. Through the course of the fishery, they probably see 40,000 to 50,000 different people participating there, and the photo didn't show the 400-600 boats that are also participating.

He said the number of permits issued for the Kenai salmon, both Kasilof and Kenai Rivers, has increased at a steady rate since 1996. It's important to recognize that each permit does not represent a single individual, but instead represents a household. ADF&G has provided data that shows that each permit represents 3.2 individuals. For 2013, the total number of permits issued was 35,211 or 112,675 Alaskans.

The harvest of Kenai River sockeye salmon during the personal use fishery has increased (comparing the average harvest for four years beginning in 2000) from 163,159 fish to 491,173 fish, an increase of over 300 percent in 10 years.

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SENATOR FRENCH joined the committee.

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MR. KOCH said fish waste on their beaches used to be one of the more dramatic problems the city was forced to deal with. It was unsightly, unhealthy, and attracted other wildlife; fecal matter from seagulls contributed to elevated bacteria counts which far exceeded the EPA water-quality standards in the near shores of the Kenai River.

During the 2013 personal use fishery, the City of Kenai spent approximately \$430,000 to manage fish waste, solid waste, to provide and service permanent and portable toilets, and other services solely dedicated to respond to the personal use fishery that takes place on the city's lands. They collected roughly the same income from user fees; it does not make a profit from the fishery. They estimate that user fees are collected from only about 30-40 percent of the participants who benefit from those city services. They are only able to collect from parking and camping; they cannot charge for access to the beach.

He said the more effective management plan for fish waste has resulted in a marked decrease in seagulls and other animals feeding on it on the beach and that the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) continues to study the levels of bacteria present in the waters of the Kenai River during the personal use fishery.

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A beach raking operation coupled with the 2013 requirement that all fish waste must be deposited in the waters of the Kenai River of Cook Inlet has significantly reduced the problem with fish waste on the beaches. Tides redeposit fish waste at the high tide line, but in amounts that are manageable with a tractor raking operation. In 2013, the cost to the city for just the raking was over \$20,000 for the three-week period. In summary, he said, fish waste management has ultimately turned out to be one of their successes.

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They don't have their arms around the issues of loss and protection of habitat. He said the City of Kenai is the majority land owner in and around the mouth of the Kenai River, up river to mile 4.5. They have installed over 3 miles of barrier fencing to protect dune areas, but it's far from enough. The damage to and loss of near-river habitat as a result of the personal use

fishery is ongoing. It is increasing in severity and this is unacceptable. The City requests that the ADF&G undertake a habitat assessment at the mouth of the Kenai River and work cooperatively with them to develop solutions for this problem.

Given the monumental increase in participation over the last 10 years, it's not surprising that fishery participants are seeking less crowded areas near the mouth of the Kenai River to fish from, but unfortunately all the lands upriver from the mouth are environmentally sensitive. They are mostly wetlands and support nesting birds, grasses, and plants utilized for subsistence harvest by Alaskan Natives and other fragile ecosystems. Riparian habitat important to rearing salmon areas is also being destroyed by foot traffic along the river banks. Everything is open to dipnetting for the personal use fishery and the resulting damages are at times very severe.

MR. KOCH said a situation that has become much more critical over the course of the last several months is the existing south shore access along Dune Road and Old Cannery Road. Both require fishery participants to travel north along the beach to reach the mouth of the Kenai River. In doing so, vehicles travel through eight privately owned properties. Ownership extends to mean high water or an elevation of 19.1 feet. The property owners have stated that they will block traffic from traveling over their private property this year. The City of Kenai is facilitating discussions between them and the ADF&G to attempt to develop interim and permanent solutions.

New access is being proposed by the City that will decrease the travel distance on the beach by up to one-half mile. This realignment will eliminate the conflict with private property owners where the alleged trespass occurs and it will minimize conflicts with high tide as it relates to access only during mean high water along private properties. Providing this access is estimated to cost \$2.1 million.

If access is prohibited across the private properties, the City during this year's personal use fishery may limit access periods to the south beach when tides are at 16.1 feet or lower. He explained that on many days only three tides would not impact access. On some days there are 12 hours that access would not be possible on the beach and given the thousands of vehicles that are there, it would be a tremendous conflict. Hopefully, the Alaska Legislature will consider funding for alternative access and the private property owners may then allow access across their beach properties during the 2014 season.

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He said the City's resources to respond to the state's personal use fishery at the mouth of the Kenai River are extremely tapped. They are at the breaking point of being able to respond for simple things like hauling garbage off and raking fish waste down the beach. Trespass in the environmentally sensitive areas on private property is becoming more the norm rather than a rare circumstance.

As a solution they would request that the ADF&G work cooperatively with the City in planning a decision-making process regarding the personal use fishery. For the last three years, the City has requested the ADF&G not open the personal use fishery to a 24 hr/day opening. The only time they can safely provide maintenance activities on that beach is from 11 p.m. to 6 a.m. when it's normally closed. When the commissioner opens it up by emergency order they can't get out on the beach to clean fish waste, pick up garbage, or service the portable toilets.

MR. KOCH said they would like the Board of Fisheries to recognize, as the federal government would under the Magnuson Stevens Act, the City's rights as a property owner in a fishing community. They submitted a proposal this year to eliminate the possibility of 24-hour openings, but the Board told the City that they just need to learn how to manage crowds, not a very cooperative stance.

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In April 2013, it was necessary for the City to submit their proposals almost a full year ahead of the Board's meeting. After that time, the ADF&G went through each proposal and made findings which were published. At the beginning of the meeting the ADF&G did nothing but give staff reports for the first day. They made two recommendations of what should happen in the Management Plan: the first was to eliminate the present Lake Management Plan, because they didn't have the funding to be able to go over it, and the second was to raise by only a couple hundred fish the lower escapement goal for Jim Creek off the Knik River. Aside from that, the ADF&G felt they had the tools to be able to effectively manage the Upper Cook Inlet fisheries. The public had an opportunity then for three days to make comments at the meeting, then the deliberations went to the Board of Fisheries. The process up to that point was very open; every proposal and recommendation could be followed, but when it got into the Board's hands things changed. Several of the

proposals were amended and essentially became new Board-generated proposals that the public and the ADF&G never had a chance to comment on. They weren't judged by scientists or biologists. In the course of 10-20 minutes, brand new proposals were created and approved by the Board of Fisheries.

MR. KOCH said even if he agreed that each of those actions came to a positive result, he was still offended by that process. He thought that all Alaskans should be offended by it when eight months of process went before the meeting and then in the course of minutes brand new management decisions that have far-reaching effects are brought up.

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SENATOR FRENCH, on behalf of the dipnet fishermen from Anchorage, thanked him for a well-run, friendly operation. It's a positive experience for him as a casual fisherman.

MR. KOCH said he hoped that experience only gets better in being able to find a way to work with the state to resolve some of their issues.

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SENATOR MICCICHE said he is proud of the way crowds have been handled in the past, yet as they are increasing Mr. Koch explained how the population tripled on weekends. He asked how the legislature can help with other than the access issues.

MR. KOCH responded that certainly access issues on the south is most critical, but the north, as well. Because this fishery takes place only for three weeks a year and their population more than tripled, at times it's very difficult to create the infrastructure to support it based on revenues that can be derived in only three weeks. For instance, if they were going to build a 250-500 place campground, it's very difficult to justify the capital cost for the three weeks they could get revenue from it. Personal use permit fees were a possibility for providing some of those capital improvements that would enhance the experience at the mouth of the river.

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SENATOR MICCICHE asked if ADF&G could publish a brochure about how to access the fishing grounds and handle fish.

MR. KOCH said they do some of that on line now, but it could be expanded; some people in environmentally sensitive areas just

don't know it. Information could come in with returned permits, for instance.

SENATOR DYSON said he hears that people who are not residents set up industrial scale harvesting, but he wanted to know if that was true.

MR. KOCH replied yes; they see very efficient operations, but he didn't know if they were Alaskans or not.

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BRUCE KNOWLES, Chairman, Matanuska-Susitna Borough Fish and Wildlife Commission, gave a presentation on Northern Cook Inlet fisheries. He said he had lived in the Valley since 1982. He had had a guide service for a few years in the winter and is now a sport fisherman. He got involved in salmon issues in the late 90s and has been involved ever since.

He said the Commission was established in 2007 and was first named the Blue Ribbon Fisheries Committee. Its purpose is to represent the Borough in conservation and allocation of fish, wildlife, and habitat. He said Upper Cook Inlet (UCI) salmon fisheries are essential to the character of life and the economy of the Mat-Su Borough (MSB). There is a compact amount of time during which the fish swim through. It's something that can be readily taken care of because of the complexity and the changes year by year. Two-thirds of Alaska residents reside along the Upper Cook Inlet road system; approximately 250,000 people sport fish annually; 160,000 are salmon fishermen and 300,000 households fish for personal use. One out of three Alaskans sport fish, the highest rate of fishing in the nation.

The economic significance of sport fishing has only recently been recognized. Statewide, \$1.4 billion was spent by sport fishers in 2007 and half of the sport fishing in Alaska occurs in Cook Inlet. Anglers spent \$733 million in 2007 to fish there, which supported 8,056 jobs and generated \$55 million in state and local taxes. Anglers fished nearly 300,000 angler days in 2007 and spent \$118 million and generated \$31-64 million to the local economy. Wholesale fishing in 2007 amounted to \$77 million. Mr. Knowles said he was trying to illustrate that Alaskans depend very heavily on these resources for their food.

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MR. KNOWLES said issues affecting salmon abundance in the Northern Cook Inlet are fresh water invasive species, loss of wetlands, fish barriers, and the high seas by-catch, which

nobody has any control over, and federal and fisheries policies. In Cook Inlet there are research gaps in commercial harvest data. Low salmon abundance in Upper Cook Inlet affects management of the Central District. There is a lack of scientific data on when the fish are moving through, but that is being fixed.

He said the Borough has been "dinged" for culvert problems and that has resulted in replacing and repairing 86 old culverts. He noted in areas that have stocks of concern have very few culverts, because they are in roadless areas.

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Pike suppression has come along very well in the Lower Susitna; on Alexander Creek, over 12,000 pike have been killed by the state and studies show juvenile salmon recolonizing it. Culverts are adversely affecting salmon, because of growth in the borough; they all fall in a core area around Palmer and Wasilla.

Solutions for low salmon abundance involve revising the Upper Cook Inlet management plans to ensure sustained yield for Upper Cook Inlet for both Northern and Central District salmon. A major improvement by the Board of Fisheries was establishing an area for the fish to move through the central district drift area without overharvesting.

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He explained that there are discreet stock zones in Bristol Bay and there is a core area where boats can't fish, but a fishing area at the throats of all the different rivers. The Board of Fisheries should maintain and refine the Upper Cook Inlet conservation corridor, which would require studies that the legislature can help the department fund.

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He said that genetics and allocation acoustic studies were done in the last couple of years, which will improve and enhance the department's management by identifying the main mixing areas for the different salmon

MR. KNOWLES said the cause of low abundance in Northern Cook Inlet was that northern district salmon were not getting through commercial fishing gauntlets in sufficient numbers. ADF&G lacks in-season management tools and there is a lack of genetic identification of salmon species other than sockeyes there. This is something they have been trying to get in. The first main fisheries studies that were done in the late 1900s happened when

the legislature funded studies on the Northern District sockeyes.

Upper Cook Inlet Solutions: Revise Upper Cook Inlet Management Plan, which they have done. Discreet harvest zones, which will be tested for the first time this year, should show positive results with more fish getting back to the Northern Districts. Maintain Upper Cook Inlet conservation corridor, which is going to be a key. Genetics and acoustics all need to be maintained for the next few years.

The Board came up with the conservation corridor, harvest zones, and expanded harvest zones to try and move fish up the Inlet. The majority of stocks of concerns are in the Northern District for coho and sockeyes. The Lower Susitna coho nearly missed being a stock of concern.

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One of the things they have been working on with the ADF&G and the Borough is for the legislature to authorize an additional test fishery above Kalgan Island to monitor fish as they move through the Central District. They have already found out that that in areas 6 and 7 the test stations are not finding enough fish to warrant doing the studies there and have talked about moving the test fishery line down to the lower end of Kalgan Island, which is in the main mixing zones they have tried to get data on. So, they support moving it.

Capital funding going to the MSB of \$4-5 million for FY 2014: science and research: they have asked for a contract person to work with them to develop gap analysis, find areas that need to be improved, and to help determine what needs to be done to better use this fisheries research money. They hope to have him on board sometime in mid-May. They continue to work on resource access for 12.2 miles of habitat funded by grants and borough funds.

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Next steps for the Fish and Wildlife Commission:

- \$2.5 million from the legislature funding FY2015 research and habitat projects
- MSB fish research: conduct studies in UCI fisheries and data gap analysis
- Advocate for improved UCI management for all users to the Board of Fisheries

MR. KNOWLES said one of the main things they have heard is that people are moving to the Kenai to do their sport fishing, because the MSB doesn't have enough fish for a personal use fishery.

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CHAIR GIESSEL said warming waters in the Matsu was presented to her as a factor affecting spawning and survival.

MR. KNOWLES said he hadn't heard that or heard of warming studies. He had heard about water warming on the high seas, which is causing problems.

CHAIR GIESSEL said she had seen a report that the ADF&G commissioner had, but it might not be widely distributed yet.

MR. KNOWLES asked if was just in the Northern District or all of Cook Inlet.

CHAIR GIESSEL answered that this particular study dealt with the Northern Matsu area.

MR. KNOWLES said he wanted to get a copy of it.

SENATOR MICCICHE said healthy returns of fish to the Northern Cook Inlet is one of his top priorities, because inadequate returns compromises the sport and commercial fisheries further south. He was glad Mr. Knowles had talked about some of the pike problems and oceanic atmospheric affects they can't control.

He hoped they could work together more in the future as this is not only a Cook Inlet problem. When they talk about interception, he urged that they not always focus on their nearest neighbors; there are many fisheries in Cook Inlet and the ocean also affects returns.

Primarily Senator Micciche said he wanted to note that there are 500 drifters and at least that many setnetters sitting in front of two rivers that literally are a gauntlet in a 10 mile area. Those are healthy river systems that continue to return millions of fish year after year. He hoped they could work together in identifying the issues system-wide instead of focusing too locally on the solutions.

MR. KNOWLES said he agreed completely and that he has requested the department and the board to do that. He said they had started increasing the returns to the Kenai in the late 1990s

and that the return had gone from 250,000 to over 1 million. He had asked them to over-escape their area for 10 years to see what could be done to provide additional fish in the Central District.

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ANDY SZCZESNY, member, Kenai River Professional Guides Association, Soldotna, Alaska, said he had been a registered Kenai River guide for 28 years. He is also a member of the Kenai River Special Managed Area Advisory Board. He had held a number of different positions in the City of Soldotna and was appointed to the Board of Fisheries in 2002; he had also held several positions on advisory committees involving fisheries and guiding.

He said the ADF&G study of economic impacts and contributions of guided anglers on the Kenai River shows they are responsible for \$40 million in direct expenditures annually and their annual fees account for about \$400,000 to the State of Alaska annually. This number does not include additional boat launch and parking fees, which would probably bring it closer to \$500,000. He said 71 percent of the Kenai River sport fishing guides are Alaska residents; 285 of them registered in 2013, a loss of 111 since 2007, which was the peak year (with 396 registered guides). Forty-percent of them have 10-plus years of experience.

MR. SZCZESNY said the Kenai River guided angler effort accounts for 51,430 fish (14 percent of the total effort) annually, down from its historic average by 67 percent. The early run king salmon guided angler effort is down from its historic average by 83 percent; the late run guided angler king salmon effort is down by 70 percent.

He said the Kenai River guides are the most regulated group of sport fishing guides in the state and are governed by a total of six separate state and federal agencies. They are required to pass a three-credit college course, which is five days of classes. The Board of Fisheries has adopted policies that limit both days of the week and hours of the day they can operate, which has resulted in limited opportunities for both resident and non-resident guided anglers to access the Kenai River. No fishing from a guided vessel on Sundays and Mondays through May, June, and July; no fishing from a guided vessel from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. May, June, and July; no fishing for coho from a guide vessel from the Moose River confluence on Mondays in August, September, and October.

The Kenai River sport fishing guides pay the highest annual licensing fees in the State of Alaska, he said. A resident Kenai River guide spends \$1,075 annually for a license and a non-resident spends \$2,075. An annual sport fishing guide license for the remainder of the state is \$150, and that allows guiding on every drainage except the Kenai River.

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SENATOR MICCICHE said it was good to hear his voice and that it's imperative to understand that every aspect of these fisheries is important to the economy and that none of these user groups can go away.

MR. SZCZESNY said the May and June King salmon closure will affect the numbers and that the sport fishery had fallen rapidly in the last five or six years.

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DWIGHT KRAMER, Chairman, Kenai Area Fishermen's Coalition, Kenai, Alaska, read his comments:

The Kenai Area Fisherman's Coalition is a private angler group that was formed in 2007 to provide a voice for private anglers and promote conservation of our resources for future generations to enjoy. We have 10 past state and federal fisheries biologists on our Board of Directors or in our membership.

We advocate for science-based fisheries management and sustained resource stability by providing direct input to agencies regarding fisheries management and habitat issues. We have no commercial interests.

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First, I would like to address the Upper Cook Inlet (UCI) king salmon stocks devastated by overfishing and a poorly regulated commercial sector. During the early part of the 1900s the UCI king stocks were devastated by over-fishing in a poorly regulated commercial sector. It took about 20 years or so for recovery of these stocks so they could produce harvestable numbers once again. During this recovery there were years of commercial closures and the sport fishery, as we know it, had not developed yet. The fish enjoyed virtually natural river systems to reproduce and recover. There was little development and hardly any sport fishing effort and no pike.

Now we find ourselves in another period of low king salmon abundance partly because of ocean phenomena that we don't fully understand and partly because of human effects. We now have trawlers operating in the high seas that take countless thousands of Kings as by-catch, vast developments and roadways along and crossing our streams, hydrocarbon contamination from boat engines, bank erosion and turbidity issues from boat wakes, invasive species (pike) in many of our lakes and waterways and, of course, a growing public demand for fishing opportunities.

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One of the causes of this recent collapse has to be shouldered by a mismanaged in-river sport and guided sport fishery. Never before in their history had our king salmon been fished for size selectivity and pursued on their spawning grounds for trophy selection.

Recent research information now suggests that targeting the largest kings may have some lasting effects on the characteristics of the stocks. Size selectivity over time can cause future returning fish to be smaller and fewer in numbers and produce fewer females than in more productive times.

Please Note: These are all symptoms that we are currently seeing in our Kenai and UCI stocks. The point being is that we should expect any recovery of these stocks to take much longer than at any other time in history because of the new human effects and a growing demand to want to fish on them as soon as there are any harvestable amounts to satisfy socio-economic interests. We have to stop taking our biggest and best breeders out of our systems and we have to have more spawning protections on some of our most productive spawning and staging areas.

We can start by protecting our largest fish with meaningful season-long slot limits individually appropriate for all of our rivers. Taxidermists have molds for all sizes and shapes of Kings so it's no longer necessary to kill a large King to get a mount made.

In the case of our current king salmon situation we have to remember that scientists tell us, "When salmon runs are at risk, conservation must be given a priority."

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Habitat Issues

Healthy salmon stocks rely on good habitat in our rivers, streams and lakes. We currently have many habitat issues that stand in our way of rebuilding declining stocks and maintaining healthy ones. Because of socio-economic issues related to the powerful guided sport fish lobby and tourism, both municipalities and state agencies are reluctant to support necessary listings of impaired water bodies as identified by the Clean Water Act and the more obvious crippling impacts of invasive species (pike) on juvenile salmon production.

In the Matsu for instance, 10 years ago we had 11 sockeye producing lakes in the Susitna drainage. Then a few years ago we were down to seven, and now we are down to four, and two of the four have failed to meet their escapement levels in the last two years. Pike and stream blockage by beaver dams are the main two reasons. We have hydrocarbon and turbidity violations associated with powerboat use in the Little Susitna that is worse than the Kenai ever was, but no Category 5 impaired water-body listing to date. In Big lake we have quit trying to enhance sockeye production, because the juvenile survival rates were so poor, because of pollution factors associated with hydrocarbon exceedances and chemical pollution associated with runoff of lawn care products (fertilizer, weed killers, etc.) and sewage issues.

In the Kenai we have different issues associated with increased use and a shift in use patterns that is not being addressed. One would think that with reduced king salmon fishing opportunities things would be better, but that is not the case. We have seen a huge increase in July powerboat traffic associated with personal use fishermen launching upriver to avoid the congestion of the lower river launches and parking. In 2013, for instance, the days that we exceeded turbidity standards on the lower river coincided with

the busiest days in the personal use (PU) fishery. This should be a growing concern to the resource for both bank erosion and juvenile salmon survival.

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Another issue of concern is the rapid growth in the in-river sockeye sport fishery. Both the guide industry and private sector have transferred efforts away from the king fishery to the more productive sockeye fishery. This doesn't come without problems though, as this is mostly a bank-oriented fishery and we are witnessing new areas of bank degradation in the riparian areas associated with riverbank crowding. The sad part is that nobody from the various agencies currently have available staff to assess these damages and make appropriate bank closures. This is an area where recent budget cuts and personnel vacancies have reduced our effectiveness in habitat protection where our vigilance now should be more rather than less.

So overall, if we don't want to end up like the Pacific Northwest and have to spend billions of dollars on reclamation projects, hatcheries and enhancement to rebuild the salmon stocks we failed to protect, we need to acknowledge our habitat problems and deal with them now rather than later. Everyone should want clean water and healthy habitat. To stand in the way of this endeavor is not prudent of good fishery management and should not be tolerated by anyone associated with legislative oversight.

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Board of Fisheries

Given the complexities of our fisheries and the current allocation issues related to declining stock issues throughout most of Alaska, it has become apparent to many that our current BOF process does not possess the technical knowledge and sometimes internal integrity to accomplish decisions based on science and available technical data.

The recent Upper Cook Inlet meeting was a prime example. A majority of the board had a preconceived agenda on how they were going to deal with the king salmon declines throughout Upper Cook Inlet and

sockeye numbers in the Susitna. That conclusion was to find a way to transfer allocations from the commercial sector to the in-river users and that they did. There was little regards for in-river conservation measures on how these fish would be protected so that we could advance a production model that would actually help us start to recover these stocks.

We believe that the benefits of this methodology will be marginal without meaningful changes in how we regulate in-river fishing methods. There was no serious consideration for how we can protect prominent spawning areas or most of the largest age class fish of our most valuable breeding component.

The current BOF process is swayed too easily by the most prominent and powerful groups and often give into political pressure, innuendo and fabricated statements rather than scientific information.

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It is time to consider a professional Board of Fisheries. With billions of dollars at stake annually involved in this decision making body we have evolved past the time when a lay board is adequate to meet the demands of our modern day fishery issues. With everything from foreign enhancement and competition, high seas mortality, global warming, evolving habitat issues, population increases and overall growing demand, we have to have a panel of experts from various areas of fisheries expertise that can better understand the volumes of data and research that is presented for evaluation in the decision making process. For instance, this last 2014 UCI meeting produced thousands of pages of data, research reports, proposals, public comment, and meeting record comments. During the meeting it became painfully obvious that the board members had not had time to adequately familiarize themselves with much of this information.

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What can the legislative body do to help?

We believe there are two important things the legislature could do that would help:

1) Initiate legislation to move toward a professional Board of Fisheries. We envision this body to be made up of paid positions selected for their scientific or socio-economic expertise in the area of fisheries management and research. We would also suggest that they would have a dedicated research staff solely for the purpose of helping them coalesce and present necessary data for the regulatory area under consideration at the time.

Members of this board would be selected by the governor and confirmed by the legislature, much as it is now. Members of this board would be selected for their knowledge of fishery issues without regards to any allocative or area representation.

The Board meetings would still invite public participation in regulatory proposals submissions and public testimony.

We're not sure exactly what for this body should actually look like but these are our suggestions. There are probably a variety of state fishery boards out there that could provide workable solutions.

2) We believe it is imperative that the legislature support a comprehensive independent research project of our UCI salmon stocks and habitat issues as they relate to the recovery and sustainability of these valuable resources. We would like to see this accomplished along the same lines as the recently published, "Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim Chinook Salmon Research Action Plan", which involved some of the most respected fishery scientists in the nation. This document laid out various hypotheses for what precipitated the declines, issues that needed attention and recommendations for research projects that could be beneficial in the recovery and long-term sustainability of the stocks.

The timing is perfect for pursuing this type of effort as there appears to be some funding that might be available through the direction of the recently approved National Marine Fisheries Service's 2012 salmon fisheries disaster relief program. It appears that the State of Alaska is going to be instrumental

in deciding how this \$20.8 million dollars is going to be divided up and dispersed within Alaska.

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To recap our testimony, we believe we need to put more emphasis on in-river King salmon production by installing regulatory sport fishing methods that protect our largest age class breeding stocks and set aside some protective zones recognized as important spawning and staging areas.

We need to acknowledge and mitigate habitat deficiencies that could cause undesirable effects on the recovery and sustainability of our fishery resources.

We need to move forward on changing to a professional Board of Fisheries to meet our modern day complexities and future demands on our fishery resources.

We need a complete and thorough and independent review of our UCI salmon stocks, habitat issues and fisheries management practices. That concludes my testimony today and I thank you very much.

4:32:42 PM

SENATOR DYSON thanked him for his balanced and knowledgeable presentation and asked him to talk about the impact of beaver in salmon rearing areas and possible solutions.

MR. KRAMER answered from talking to biologists he understands that a lot of that takes place in difficult-to-access areas. They have talked about taking some helicopters in and blasting out some of the beaver dams, which seems to be the only way to get at them, because they are off the road system for the most part.

SENATOR MICCICHE asked if he had any proposals for protecting regions of the river into the BOF and what would be the benefits of identifying key spawning areas of the river and protecting them.

MR. KRAMER said they proposed putting two spawning areas into protected areas to the BOF: the first is above the Moose River after July 1 to help the early run, because it moves up earlier than any other segment of the king salmon population and is vulnerable to harvest longer, because the season goes through

July 31. The second closure would take place after July 15 from the Soldotna Bridge to the Moose River, which would protect both early run and late run fish. Protecting those two areas would allow harvest by people at some point who live along the river in the season, but then as the fish moved up closer to their spawning areas and spawning times, it would give them some protection. That protection would allow the state to have prudent spawning and production capabilities for the long term.

SENATOR MICCICHE said they would have to continue pressure especially after recovery and he hoped Mr. Kramer would stay engaged in protecting areas around key spawning grounds.

CHAIR GIESSEL asked his thoughts on the survival of salmon in a catch and release scenario. Do the released salmon survive to spawn?

MR. KRAMER replied in the studies that have been done on the Kenai, it looks like only about 7 percent have issues on the first hook up and that doubles on the second hook up and the ones thereafter. What seems to be unknown is the impacts of their spawning capabilities after they have been taxed on multiple hook ups in a catch and release fishery of that kind. He thought some meaningful studies would be done in that regard. It's a problem throughout the Pacific Northwest where they are trying to recover their stocks.

SENATOR MICCICHE asked if anyone had entertained spawning area restrictions that are based on the size of the return. He was looking for folks not being so hesitant to have spawning preserves if it could be temporary and if they knew they could be eliminated when the returns recover.

MR. KRAMER said he hadn't heard of that, but it should be pursued.

[4:38:22 PM](#)

ROD ARNO, Executive Director, Alaska Outdoor Council (AOC), Palmer, Alaska, said they are a statewide conservation organization with 10,000 members. He went to slide 2 of his AOC presentation, the pie chart of resources harvested by use in Alaska in 2012 put together by Dr. Jim Hall of ADF&G (on the state website). He said they represent thousands of Alaskans who aren't getting their fair share of the pie.

MR. ARNO said the personal use fishery is about one-tenth of 1 percent of the public fisheries resource harvested annually. Of

the 98.2 percent commercial fishermen many are non-residents. Only Alaskans can participate in the personal use fisheries.

He said more and more people are moving into Anchorage, Matsu and the Kenai population centers who want their share of a public resource.

[4:40:59 PM](#)

He said the mission of the Division of Commercial Fisheries is to manage subsistence, commercial and personal use fisheries in the interests of the general well-being of the people and economy of the state consistent with sustained yield and subject to allocation during the public regulatory process. The emphasis is on having the same people managing commercial and personal use whether it's in a subsistence area or not. This is a problem, Mr. Arno said: the entire commercial fishery complex - fishermen, buyers, processors, marketers, regulators - versus a relative handful of Alaskans who want to put fish in their freezer.

[4:42:13 PM](#)

MR. ARNO said the Alaska Constitution clearly places the responsibility of managing the fisheries with the state legislature, which has in turn delegated that management authority to the Department of Fish and Game, who then delegated that authority to the Board of Fisheries and the Board of Game. The department is clearly a part of the executive branch, but the BOF is an extension of the legislature. This is supposed to be the people's board, so they wouldn't have a conflict in selecting and then confirming a member.

He plead with them to be more engaged in this process saying that last year two nominees for the Board of Fisheries were asked seven questions by the Senate Resources Committee. In 2012 there were two nominees and the Resources Committee asked only one question. This is a job interview and they wouldn't hire someone for their staff without asking questions! He said please don't put someone on this very important board without having some understanding of whether or not they think it's okay for their constituents to get one-tenth of 1 percent of the fish in a public resource for their personal use.

Slide 6 showed how the BOF allocates their workload through a committee system much like the legislature. A total of 25 proposals were submitted on personal use fisheries compared to other committees that had far fewer proposals. He wanted them to see that the public is engaged in the issue of personal use and

other fisheries in Upper Cook Inlet and they are trying to make progress through the board system. So, when they see him in front of them they know the board system has not resolved allocation issues as user groups in Cook Inlet fluctuate. The evidence is in the first pie chart he showed them where they get a small sliver of the pie.

[4:45:11 PM](#)

Slide 7 was a graph of the local food activity by region in Alaska in 2011 (from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, used by the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) to track social trends). About 25 Alaskans were in that survey. It is a good illustration of the demand for wild food. Well over half of the people surveyed in the urban areas of Anchorage and Matsu stated that they harvested wild food. And as more people relocate from rural Alaska to the Railbelt it is reasonable to expect that the demand for wild food in Cook Inlet Basin will increase.

[4:46:18 PM](#)

The legislature says they support wild food harvest. Last year they passed HCR 1 that requested the governor to form a Food Policy Development Working Group, which he did, to work with the Alaska Food Policy Council. He hoped the legislature would look at their progress from time to time to ensure that those Alaskans who want to harvest their own wild salmon will be represented in that process.

Slide 8 had a map that shows rivers with the stocks of concern. It's important to know that 7 of the 11 stocks of concern are in Cook Inlet in the northern district. It shows that during the last two board cycles (the Board considers Upper Cook Inlet issues every three years), commercial fishing interests have characterized this problem of weak stocks as a result of habitat degradation. During public testimony just a few weeks ago in Anchorage, limited entry permit holder after permit holder testified that it was the fault of the people who live in the northern district that there are no fish. One of the things often pointed to are the culverts, which they say fish can't pass through. But the green box in the lower middle of the map contains the area of the Matsu where there is transportation infrastructure with 86 culvert improvement projects underway, but there aren't any streams that host stocks of concern in that area. His point is that you don't have to worry about habitat.

[4:48:20 PM](#)

Slide 9 was a Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOTPF) transportation analysis, the West Susitna Access Reconnaissance Study for resource development. He said development is coming to the Susitna drainage and AOC doesn't oppose that. The good news is that it's probably far enough off that the fish habitat can be protected. The Study is a "must-read" for anyone who cares about the fish in the northern district, as well as all of Cook Inlet. The study presents several options for transportation corridors over and parallel to major salmon streams and water ways.

Slide 10 is DNR's Susitna Matsu Area Plan that was adopted in 2011. Many different colors represented different resource classifications of state and public domain. It showed that the major salmon producing waters flowing right through the multi-color quilt. He said the fish need someone to watch all the "kids in the sandbox called the Susitna drainage" to make sure that this precious resources is not affected by the development of other resources or urban sprawl.

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In conclusion, Mr. Arno said first, Alaskans want to harvest wild, local, organic, healthy Upper Cook Inlet salmon; it's a public resource. Second, there is an imbalance in that system currently, and as more people move into the Cook Inlet drainage, it's only going to get more competitive (an allocation issue). Third, they are asking for the legislature to help. Finally, he said he had been in the process of advocating for Alaskans who want to harvest their own Cook Inlet salmon for many years and he couldn't remember a Resource Chair who dedicated the time and focus Senator Giessel had to Cook Inlet salmon and he thanked her for setting the week aside to hear from users and managers.

[4:51:31 PM](#)

SENATOR DYSON asked if 98.2 percent of the fish harvest on slide 2 included big commercial fisheries in the Bering Sea and Bristol Bay.

MR. ARNO answered yes; it indicated the statewide wild food harvest taken annually not only of fish, but game, too.

SENATOR DYSON added that Dutch Harbor/Unalaska is the largest fish landing port in North America, and realizing that that is happening where there is no personal use sport fishing distorts the picture a little bit, but it is profoundly true.

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SENATOR MICCICHE said he is also a member of the AOC and supported most of its objectives, but he wanted to chat with Mr. Arno about what an appropriate share is "for filling the freezer."

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MR. ARNO responded that this is an evolving issue as the population in Alaska increases and folks migrate to urban centers from rural Alaska. "Cook Inlet is right at the edge of the testing of the board's process in fisheries as well as game, just because of the increasing population." Of course, conservation is first with AOC.

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CHAIR GIESSEL said last week this committee passed a bill that establishes a Susitna State Forest and one of its provisions allows timber harvest, but it also preserves those borders along salmon-bearing water bodies. She asked where the AOC stands relative to the establishment of state forests.

MR. ARNO answered that SB 23 would only select about 700,000 acres of high value timber, and that's been a "real bone of contention" for the AOC. He advocated for a larger state forest that would include high-quality habitat protecting the drainages in the northern district, as the state has millions of acres of unencumbered land that won't be protected by provisions of a state forest.

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CHAIR GIESSEL asked his thoughts on a professional BOF.

MR. ARNO responded that the AOC is satisfied with the current public board and that the process works. It works because the public is involved and has different avenues to participate: they can petition and ask the administration to appoint certain people and they can go to the legislature and ask for support to get those individuals confirmed or not. They can also go to the Board of Fisheries and put in their proposals. However, the process only works as well as the public is willing to engage in it.

[4:58:28 PM](#)

MEGAN SMITH, member, Kenai Peninsula Fishermen's Association (KPFA), introduced herself and Amber Every.

[5:00:01 PM](#)

AMBER EVERY, member, Kenai Peninsula Fishermen's Association, said their 300-plus members are primarily setnetters but also include drifters and seiners who fish in Cook Inlet, and on some fishing sites some four generations of families participate together. They represent an industry where 84 percent of the participants are Alaska residents and 56 percent of those reside on the Kenai Peninsula year-round; the primary species harvested in Cook Inlet by an overwhelming margin is sockeye.

MS. EVERY said she had been an Upper Cook Inlet fisherman for 20 years and was proud to be raising two fourth-generation setnetters. She said this presentation would explain who the Upper Cook Inlet setnetters are and their role in the fishery. They will then look at the importance of sockeye in Upper Cook Inlet. Next they will analyze the impact of personal use and in-river sport fisheries and the Kenai River late run Chinook; lastly, they will look at what they would like from the legislature.

She said setnetters are families and they are proud to have fed the world a natural and healthy protein that it is sustainable for over 100 years. They are stewards of the resource and because of purposeful planning by ADF&G future generations will continue to feed the world this amazing protein.

Setnet fishing methods in Cook Inlet have changed very little over the past 135 years and their goal is to continue to fight for their families and small businesses. Beyond the cultural and historical part of their fishery, they play an important role in the local economy. The estimated overall economic contribution to the Cook Inlet region from harvesters and processors of Cook Inlet salmon approaches \$350 million per year. Sockeye are the predominant species harvested in Cook Inlet. From 1980 to 2011 sockeye account for 88 percent of the more than \$2 billion total in revenues in 2012 dollars. In 2010 and 2011, Cook Inlet ranked fourth among Alaska major salmon fisheries.

The sockeye salmon is the heart of Upper Cook Inlet, Ms. Every said, and Alaskan families depend on a healthy annual return to feed their families. Their local economy runs off the summer activity related to the sockeye run, as each summer the population swells with anglers, dipnetters, and commercial fishermen who come to harvest it - all the while spending money in the local economy.

MS. EVERY said that 84 percent of east side setnet permits are owned by Alaska residents who support businesses, pay taxes, and look after the best interests of the local community.

[5:03:00 PM](#)

She showed a graph of the 10-year average of over 1.2 million sockeye spawners for escapement and said the reason this should be of concern is that spawning escapements of 1.2 million will have future yields of 2 million; spawning escapements of 600,000-900,000 sockeye provides a 4 million return. A 2 million return means 1 million goes to escapement. Personal use and sport fishing harvest is nearing 1 million.

What is left for the commercial industry? The numbers show that the commercial fishermen are being allocated out of the fishery. Another river in Upper Cook Inlet with a vibrant healthy sockeye run is the Kasilof River with an 11-year average of 364,790, which exceeds the maximum BEG range of 160,000-340,000, which again reduces future sockeye yields.

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MS. SMITH took up the presentation and continued that the Kenai in-river sockeye fishery has grown exponentially. The in-river harvest is at its highest point and has yet to harvest what is allocated by the Board of Fisheries. With increased user participation, there is increased pressure in riparian habitats. The sockeye fishery is primarily a bank fishery putting fishermen right on critical Chinook spawning and rearing habitats. She said the City of Kenai covered the PU dipnet fishery pretty well and showed a picture of the largest unlimited dipnet fishery in the state.

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She showed a graph of Kenai river sockeye timing and explained that 2013 was the first year that the sockeye did not hit on a weekend, which limited the harvest of non-local participants. The "large pulse" entered the river after a regular east side setnet opening on Monday. The next three charts illustrated 2010/11/12 showing that the peaks and secondary peaks fell on the weekends.

MS. SMITH said in 2013 the ADF&G converted the late-run Chinook goal, which was simply an adjustment for the new Didson sonar counter. In fact, the recommended goal provides a small safety factor of 3,000 Chinook.

The next graph showed the Kenai River late-run Chinook escapement levels. The red lines represented the goals recommended by ADF&G. In 2003-2006, the escapement levels were greatly exceeded, one of the factors that contributed to density-dependency to recent declines in late-run Chinook. It's important to see that the Kenai River late-run Chinook have met their escapement goals for the past 27 years and they have exceeded the upper goal for 19 of those years. She said many people use the last 10 years when the drop is significant, but she liked to look at the whole run.

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MS. SMITH said the average annual harvest rate on the Kenai River late-run Chinook is 39 percent. The other users represented in the slide include subsistence, personal use (PU), drift, and sport fisheries. The majority of the harvest is taken by the sport fishery and even if the setnets were closed for an entire season, only an additional 13 percent of the total run would enter the river. There are times when escapement goals for both Chinook and sockeye runs cannot be met, and that's why the trade-off discussion is needed. Which stock do more Alaskans benefit from?

[5:07:09 PM](#)

UCI setnetters want legislative support for the 735 small family businesses. They would like to see funding for research in spawning and rearing areas and juvenile outmigration studies for Chinook. They would like pro-active multi-agency action plans for the Upper Cook Inlet Chinook stocks and a closer look at the Board of Fisheries process to remove conflict and political pressure and restoration of science-based, biological decision making.

She said some associations are trying to circumvent the process and outlaw setnetting in Cook Inlet, but what would that produce? Of the two Chinook stocks that return to the Kenai River, only 13 percent more late-run Kings would return. She also pointed out that 40 percent of the 13 percent are "jack kings." Removing them from the equation would leave 7 percent and there would be no benefit to the early run Chinook, as setnetters have not fished on that stock for decades, and 736 permit holders and crewmembers, would be out of work; 615 of those businesses are owned by Alaska residents. The loss of businesses would backlash into local communities.

MS. SMITH said that setnetting is an important tool in maintaining sustainable sockeye salmon goals. Eliminating

setnetters would limit economic diversification and cause community conflict rather than community cooperation, and would the gain be worth the loss?

5:08:59 PM

MS. SMITH said they need the legislature's help to guarantee Chinook will survive for future generations. Quality research is needed to identify key areas in Chinook development. The early-run Kenai Chinook run has failed to meet its goal for the past two years; Beaver Creek and Sly Hawk Creek in Soldotna are examples of tributaries that should be producing hundreds of fish.

The identification of high-density spawning and rearing areas in the Kenai River drainage is critical in breaking the cycle of low abundance, she said. Juvenile out-migration studies provide a last look at the stock going into the sea, which gives a more accurate picture for forecasting the stocks that return.

5:09:47 PM

She said it's time to build community cooperation not community conflict. The Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim Sustainable Salmon Initiative (AYKSSI) is a first comprehensive look at the causes leading to the decline of king salmon stocks in the AYK area and it is a great example of how to proceed in Cook Inlet. This panel is comprised of 13 fisheries scientists with diverse expertise; part of AYKSSI is the action plan component. Its goal is to determine which variables and processes most likely are causative factors in the AYK Chinook salmon decline and to produce more detailed set of research priorities and questions to better understand the key drivers of salmon abundance in the region. It's time for Cook Inlet to have a solid plan to find answers for survival of its Chinook.

5:10:39 PM

She said after attending the 2014 Upper Cook Inlet meeting, she was left with a lot of questions and a little less faith. There are 7 BOF members who are making biological, social, and economic decisions in a billion-dollar fishing industry. Many of the implications of their decisions are not known at the time and may not be realized until implementation. The members are required to read and retain overwhelming amounts of information in an extremely limited timeframe. Initially, all the public and department proposals are vetted through the public and department comment process and there is ample time for all groups to weigh in on potential ramifications. But mid-board meeting proposals may be generated and voted on with little or

no public, scientific or biological input. Unintended and unforeseen consequences result from such a harried process.

ADF&G initially weighs in on proposals, but as plans develop, they are relied on less and less. The Upper Cook Inlet meeting has not been held on the Kenai Peninsula since 1999, and this is really important. The cost and time required for a two-week meeting prohibits many private citizens from participating. The tone of this meeting is that of conflict and politics, which fosters public mistrust in the process and previous board precedent are the only rules that the board adheres to, which leads to confusion and lack of consistency. She said they are concerned about the BOF process and hope that trust can be reestablished.

[5:12:40 PM](#)

SENATOR MICCICHE said recently the King Salmon Task Force said the setnetters seemed unwilling to adjust to looking at other methods of catch in times of low abundance. He agreed with them on the initiative saying it's absolutely an unacceptable approach to shut down hundreds of independent small business owners. But they must work together to ensure the survival of all the different user groups, and he wanted to know if they were open to exploring other methods of catching until there are adequate supplies of king salmon.

MS. SMITH responded that setnetters are exploring other options, but they want an answer based on science. Some have cut their nets in half just to see what that will do, but they find there is "no magic bullet" and that is what people are looking for.

CHAIR GIESSEL said she appreciated the efforts made by the setnetters and that she had seen a model of a proposed method of capturing by-caught king salmon and not handling them so the survival rate is much higher.

She said she was going to ask her some basic questions, because some people are not real familiar with the setnet issues. She asked the significance of her chart indicating that the peak occurred after the weekend and asked of that.

MS. SMITH answered that chart was created by ADF&G as a response to the idea that commercial fishermen are taking all the fish on the weekends. This illustrated that the peak of the run hit immediately after the commercial fishing period. In the previous three years, the peak and secondary peak hit on the weekend, so

everyone could get their fish. Not peaking on a weekend limits participation for people who don't live locally.

CHAIR GIESSEL asked what days has the BOF limited setnet fishing.

MS. SMITH answered that there is a mandatory closure right before the weekend every week to allow fish passage. Recently this "window" could happen on Tuesday or Wednesday.

CHAIR GIESSEL asked when they can fish.

MS. SMITH answered that they have regular periods on Mondays and Thursdays, but they don't necessarily get to fish them. They have been closed out for the past two years. The department has the authority to open them on emergency order if they are worried about getting too many sockeye in the river.

[5:17:32 PM](#)

SENATOR DYSON asked how effective the mesh size regulation is in keeping setnetters from catching kings while fishing reds.

MS. SMITH answered that they are 99 percent efficient at harvesting sockeyes. Less than 1 percent of their catch is king salmon.

SENATOR DYSON explained that the department requires a maximum mesh size that is designed to exclude the big fish.

MS. SMITH said that was correct and that the regulation is 6 inches, but they go smaller than that at 5 1/8 inches.

SENATOR DYSON asked if they pick can pick kings out of the gear without tearing them up.

MS. SMITH answered yes. Their licenses don't differentiate between salmon species, but their mesh is designed to gill the smaller fish.

[5:19:16 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL asked her opinion on changing the BOF to a professional scientific-based board.

MS. SMITH said it is worth looking at. They feel there is an overwhelming load of information to manage along with the different species of fish and scientific support is needed.

SENATOR MICCICHE asked the difference between fishing a flood and an ebb, because a lot of people blame their lack of fish on commercial fishermen.

MS. SMITH agreed and said a lot of it depends on location, also. Amber is south of the mouth of the river and more efficient on the ebb, and she fishes even further south of Calm Gulch and typically has stronger hits on the flood. They can only access their nets at slack tide. Fish move into the river with the tides.

SENATOR MICCICHE said so, the day that 232,000 fish hit the river was right after fish day and if you fished the flood, it was amazing: the entire sky above the water and river is alive with jumpers. But six hours later the fishing is very poor. He said they want people to be successful when they come down for personal use.

CHAIR GIESSEL thanked the participants and said the committee would hear on Friday from ADF&G about the studies they had been doing.

[5:23:00 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL adjourned the Senate Resources Standing Committee meeting at 5:23 p.m.