

PROPOSAL 162

5 AAC 57.140. Kenai River guiding and guided fishing requirements in the Kenai River Drainage Area.

Allow guiding on the Kenai River prior to 6:00 a.m. and after 6:00 p.m. as follows:

OMIT Section 5 AAC 57.140(c) to read as follows;

Section 5 AAC 57.140 - Kenai River guiding and guided fishing requirements in the Kenai River Drainage Area

((c) FROM MAY 1 THROUGH JULY 31, SPORT FISHING FROM A REGISTERED SPORTFISHING GUIDE VESSEL DOWNSTREAM FROM AN ADF&G REGULATORY MARKER LOCATED AT THE OUTLET OF SKILAK LAKE IS PERMITTED ONLY FROM 6:00 A.M. TO 6:00 P.M.)

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? *2. What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?

The discrimination of guided sportfishing anglers in May, June, and July on the Kenai River. With current regulations, throughout the months of May, June, and July guided sportfishing anglers downstream of Skilak Lake are only allowed to fish from a guide vessel from 6AM – 6PM. These days were removed from guided sport fisherman in an effort to bring more parity between guided and private anglers king salmon harvest. Due to the dynamic nature of our fisheries, and continued low abundance of Kenai River King Salmon, the majority of guided sportfishing anglers are not targeting King Salmon but have transitioned into participating in more sustainable in river fisheries. Additionally, actively operating Registered Kenai River Guide numbers have seen a sharp decline in boat-based angling during May, June, and July in the past five years. The lack of opportunity for boat based guided anglers prior to 6AM and after 6PM forces nearly all guided boat-based participants into a similar hours of operation, resulting in additional pressure and the potential for increased user conflict. The increased participation in the Kenai River Sockeye fishery, by both private and guided anglers, has resulted in riverbanks and gravel bars being occupied by anglers for most of the day in the timeframe allotted for boat based guided sportfishing, thus the boat-based angling has become more challenging, with fewer areas to access and fish. By removing the hour restrictions in Section 5 AAC 57.140 (c) on boat based guided sportfishing participants alternate start times could be implemented leading to less crowding and/or user conflict at peak times of in river use.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai River Professional Guide Association

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