

**PROPOSAL 245**

**5 AAC 60.122. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Knik Arm Drainages Area.**

Allow sport fishing in the Fish Creek drainage 7 days a week as follows:

(5) In the Fish Creek drainage,

(A) the waters from ADF&G regulatory markers located at its mouth upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located one-quarter mile upstream from the Knik—Goose Bay Road, are open to sport fishing [EVERY SATURDAY AND SUNDAY] June 15 — July 14, and beginning the second Saturday in August through December 31 [ON SATURDAYS AND SUNDAYS] from 5 a.m. — 10 p.m., except that sport fishing for king salmon is closed;

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** The area open to sport fishing for salmon at Fish Creek in the Knik Arm drainage is incredibly small — upstream of tidewater there is less than 1/2 mile open to salmon fishing. Once above tidewater, the Creek is shallow, in the waters open to salmon fishing, and the fish tend to move through this area rapidly resulting in a low harvest rate for the sport fishery. Because of these conditions this proposal asks the board to consider making the area open to sport salmon fishing on a 7-day per week basis.

Even with a 7-day per week sport fishery, as proposed, there would remain a 7-hour window every evening / morning, when the salmon could migrate uninhibited through the area open to salmon fishing. In addition, there would also remain a 5-day closure window (at or near peak run timing) between the first weekend and second weekend in August where additional sockeye and coho salmon escapement could occur.

Utilizing Fish Creek Weir, ADF&G has been monitoring this stream for various lengths of time over many seasons during the sockeye and coho salmon returns, and has gained considerable information on salmon run timing and entry patterns for both species with established escapement goals. When the weir is in the creek, it provides tight inseason monitoring of escapement levels so the sport fishery regulations could be altered quickly if any escapement concerns were to occur. Even at times when the Fish Creek Weir has been removed in late July or early August, ADF&G data supports that Little Susitna River weir coho salmon data could be used as a surrogate for inseason management — when needed. the issue statement here.

**PROPOSED BY:** Stephanie Nowers

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