

PROPOSAL 74

5 AAC 18.200; 5 AAC 330; 5 AAC 362. Description of fishing districts and sections, Gear, and *Westside Kodiak Salmon Management Plan* to increase fishing opportunity

Modify fishing districts and sections, gear, and *Westside Kodiak Salmon Management Plan* to increase fishing opportunity as follows:

5 AAC 18.200. Description of fishing districts and sections

(9)(i) **Outer Kizhuyak Bay Section**[CENTRAL SECTION]: all waters of the Northwest Kodiak District bounded by a line from Termination Point (57° 51.37' N. lat., 152° 24.15' W. long.), to South Point (57° 53.00' N. lat., 152° 22.00' W. long.), to Ouzinkie Point (57° 54.80' N. lat., 152° 31.27' W. long.), to Shakmanof Point (57° 55.50' N. lat., 152° 35.36' W. long.), to a point at 57° 54.20' N. lat. on the east shore of Kizhuyak Bay; north of 57° 52.25' N. lat. in Anton Larsen Bay; north of 57° 51.07' N. lat. in Sharatin Bay; north of 57° 50.00' N. lat., and south of the latitude of Inner Point (57° 54.05' N. lat.) in Kizhuyak Bay;

(ii) **Outer Uganik Section: all waters of the Northwest Kodiak District** west of a line from Inner Point (57° 54.05' N. lat., 152° 47.75' W. long.) to Bird Point (57° 55.30' N. lat., 152° 47.50' W. long.); south of a line from Occident Point (57° 57.42' N. lat., 152° 51.75' W. long.) to Last Timber Point (57° 58.60' N. lat., 152° 59.05' W. long.); south of the latitude of Raspberry Cape (58° 03.58' N. lat.); north of 57° 50.00' N. lat., and west of 153° 12.60' W. long. in Terror Bay and Uganik Bay passages; north of the line from Rock Point at 57° 46.47' N. lat., 153° 29.30' W. long., to 57° 46.27' N. lat., 153° 32.90' W. long., in the South and East Arms of Uganik Bay; **North of the latitude of Cape Ugat (57° 52.279' N); and by midstream Shelikof Strait.**

(iii) **Outer Uyak Bay Section: all waters of the Northwest Kodiak District south of latitude of Cape Ugat (57° 52.279' N);** west of 153° 46.33' W. long. in Spiridon Bay; west of a line from Carlsen Point (57° 34.70' N. lat., 153° 50.15' W. long.) to 57° 35.60' N. lat., 153° 49.10' W. long., in Zachar Bay; all waters of Inner Uyak Bay north of the latitude of the southernmost tip of Amook Island (57° 25.72' N. lat.) to the west shore, and north of the latitude of the northernmost tip of Amook Island (57° 33.16' N. lat.) to the east shore; north of the latitude of Rocky Point (57° 39.78' N. lat.); and by midstream Shelikof Strait;

5 AAC 18.330. Gear

(b) In the Northwest Kodiak District, salmon may be taken only by purse seines and beach seines, except that in the **Outer Kizhuyak Bay, Outer Uganik, and Outer Uyak Bay Sections** [CENTRAL SECTION], salmon may also be taken by set gillnets.

5 AAC 18.362. Westside Kodiak Salmon Management Plan (a) The goal of the Westside Kodiak Management Plan is to achieve escapement and harvest objectives of sockeye salmon returning to the Karluk, Ayakulik, and other Westside minor sockeye salmon systems, and of pink, chum, and coho salmon returning to systems in the Southwest Afognak, **Outer Uyak Bay, Outer Uganik, Outer Kizhuyak Bay** [CENTRAL], North Cape, Anton Larsen Bay, Sharatin

Bay, Kizhuyak Bay, Terror Bay, Inner Uganik Bay, Spiridon Bay, Zachar Bay, Uyak Bay, Outer Karluk, Inner Karluk, Sturgeon Bay, Halibut Bay, Outer Ayakulik, and Inner Ayakulik Sections. It is the intent of the board that salmon bound to these systems be harvested to the extent possible by the traditional fisheries located in all 17 sections. The department shall manage the Northwest Kodiak and the Southwest Kodiak Districts and the Southwest Afognak Section in accordance with the guidelines set out in this plan.

(b)(i) The [Central and] North Cape Sections must be managed

- (1) from June 1 through approximately June 15, as a mixed-stock fishery directed on early-run sockeye salmon returning to Karluk, Ayakulik, [AND] Olga Bay, **and Buskin and Litnik** systems; the commissioner shall open, by emergency order, at least two commercial test fishing periods of 33 hours in length;
- (2) from approximately June 16 through July 5, based on early-run sockeye salmon returning to the Karluk, **Buskin and Litnik** systems;
- (3) from approximately July 6 through August 15, based on pink salmon returning to the major pink salmon systems in the Northwest Kodiak District[, OR BASED ON PINK SALMON RETURNING TO THE KARLUK SYSTEM];
- (4) from approximately August 16 through August 24, based on pink salmon returning to the Northwest Kodiak District and on late-run sockeye salmon returning to the Karluk system;
- (5) from approximately August 25 through September 5, based on late-run sockeye salmon returning to the Karluk system; and
- (6) after approximately September 5, based on late-run sockeye salmon returning to the Karluk system and coho salmon returning to the Northwest Kodiak District

(ii) The Outer Kizhuyak Bay section must be managed

- (1) from June 1 through approximately June 15, as a mixed-stock fishery directed on early-run sockeye salmon returning to Karluk, Ayakulik, and Olga Bay, systems; the commissioner shall open, by emergency order, at least two commercial test fishing periods of 33 hours in length;
- (2) from approximately June 16 through July 5, based on early-run sockeye salmon returning to the Karluk system;
- (3) from approximately July 6 through August 15, based on pink salmon returning to the major pink salmon systems in the **Kizhuyak Bay, Outer Kizhuyak Bay, Anton Larson Bay, and Sharatin Bay Sections of the Northwest Kodiak** [NORTHWEST KODIAK DISTRICT, OR BASED ON PINK SALMON RETURNING TO THE KARLUK SYSTEM];
- (4) from approximately August 16 through August 24, based on pink salmon returning to the **Kizhuyak Bay, Outer Kizhuyak Bay, Anton Larson Bay, and Sharatin Bay Sections of the Northwest Kodiak** [Northwest Kodiak District] and on late-run sockeye salmon returning to the Karluk system;
- (5) from approximately August 25 through September 5, based on late-run sockeye salmon returning to the Karluk system; and
- (6) after approximately September 5, based on late-run sockeye salmon returning to the Karluk system and coho salmon returning to the Northwest Kodiak District

(iii) The Outer Uganik Bay Section must be managed

- (1) from June 1 through approximately June 15, as a mixed-stock fishery directed on early-run sockeye salmon returning to Karluk, Ayakulik, and Olga Bay, systems, **or sockeye returning to the Uganik system**; the commissioner shall open, by emergency order, at least two commercial test fishing periods of 33 hours in length;
- (2) from approximately June 16 through July 5, based on early-run sockeye salmon returning to the **Uganik and Karluk** system;
- (3) from approximately July 6 through August 15, based on pink **and chum** salmon returning to the major [PINK] salmon systems in **Uganik and Terror Bays** [NORTHWEST KODIAK DISTRICT, OR BASED ON PINK SALMON RETURNING TO THE KARLUK SYSTEM];
- (4) from approximately August 16 through August 24, based on pink salmon returning to the **Uganik and Terror Bay Systems** [Northwest Kodiak District] and on late-run sockeye salmon returning to the Karluk system;
- (5) from approximately August 25 through September 5, based on late-run sockeye salmon returning to the Karluk system; and (6) after approximately September 5, based on late-run sockeye salmon returning to the Karluk system and coho salmon returning to the Northwest Kodiak District

(iv) The Outer Uyak Bay Section must be managed

- (1) from June 1 through approximately June 15, as a mixed-stock fishery directed on early-run sockeye salmon returning to Karluk, Ayakulik, and Olga Bay systems; the commissioner shall open, by emergency order, at least two commercial test fishing periods of 33 hours in length;
- (2) from approximately June 16 through July 5, based on early-run sockeye salmon returning to the Karluk system;
- (3) from approximately July 6 through August 15, based on pink salmon returning to the salmon systems in the **Uyak, Spiridon, and Zachar bays, and pink salmon returning to the Little River System** [NORTHWEST KODIAK DISTRICT], or based on pink salmon returning to the Karluk system;
- (4) from approximately August 16 through August 24, based on pink salmon returning to the **major salmon systems of the Uyak, Spiridon and Zachar Bays, and pink salmon returning to the Little River System** [NORTHWEST KODIAK DISTRICT] and on late-run sockeye salmon returning to the Karluk system;
- (5) from approximately August 25 through September 5, based on late-run sockeye salmon returning to the Karluk system; and
- (6) after approximately September 5, based on late-run sockeye salmon returning to the Karluk system and coho salmon returning to the Northwest Kodiak District.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Northwest Kodiak district is a critically important area for the seine and setnet fleet. It includes some of the largest bays on the island, many of the largest salmon systems, and two remote communities that are economically dependent on the salmon industry.

Since 2008 many pink salmon systems in the Northwest Kodiak district have chronically failed to produce at prior historical levels of production. While systems in other districts have been able to rebound from the pink salmon run failure of 2016, the Northwest Kodiak district still lags far behind in salmon production levels. Terror, Uganik, and the greater Uyak bays once provided consistently prolific runs, especially on even-years, but now produce relatively smaller numbers of pink salmon. The Central section of the Northwest district encompasses all of these bays and is by far largest section in the Kodiak Management Area (KMA), stretching from the northeast corner of the island all the way westward to Rocky Point, encompassing dozens of large and uncorrelated salmon systems. This section is managed as a single block based on local salmon stocks as well as sockeye and pink salmon returning to the Karluk River in the Southwest Kodiak district.

Managing such a large area as a single block forces managers to open areas with weak stocks in order to provide harvest opportunities on stronger stocks elsewhere in the section. This management tactic does not provide the refined conservation approach utilized elsewhere in the KMA where sections are divided into smaller areas with more closely correlated salmon systems. Additionally, the Central section is also currently managed on even years based pink returns to the Karluk system in addition to local stocks despite no indication that Karluk bound pinks migrate through much of this area. This proposal applies a more conservative approach to managing the area while still providing an equitable conservation burden divided between gear types, and ensuring that historical access rights remain intact.

Additionally, June management of the North Cape section does not properly account for local sockeye abundance in the Buskin and Litnik systems, both of which are critically important systems for subsistence users. No commercial fishing is permitted in June in the Northeast Kodiak district in order to provide ample subsistence opportunity to Kodiak locals. However recent restrictions on subsistence harvests in the Buskin River warrant the implementation of measures to provide the department with additional tools to protect these fish from commercial harvest while subsistence restrictions are in place. Additionally, while Afognak Bay is also often closed to commercial harvest for most if not all of the salmon season, Litnik sockeye are still likely incidentally caught in the North Cape section, and the department should have more ability to close this section when subsistence restrictions are in place.

The central section should be divided into three smaller sections similar in size to other sections in the KMA. These new sections will be managed independently based on salmon returning to streams within those areas. The adoption of this proposal will allow management to better conserve weaker stocks in individual sections while providing ample harvest opportunities on those sections with more abundant stocks. Additionally, the Outer Uyak bay section will be managed based on the abundance of local pink salmon or the abundance of pink salmon headed to the Karluk system. The three distinct sections will be the Outer Uyak Bay section, the Outer Uganik section, and the Outer Kizhuyak bay section. The sections are to be defined below along with the updated management plan.

PROPOSED BY: Chris Johnson

(HQ-F23-052)
