

KENAI RIVER PROFESSIONAL GUIDE ASSOCIATION

OCTOBER 2018

2018 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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President's Message

The Kenai River Professional Guide Association would first like to thank all members, past Presidents and Board Members that spend countless hours, days, weeks, months and years of effort contributing to this organization. Since establishment in 1984, KRPGA would not be where it is at today without the dedication of its members and Board.

That said, KRPGA needs your support. In 2019-20, the Association will be spending a lot of time and money protecting the future of in-river sport fishing interests including the interests of residents, non-residents, and personal-use fishermen. KRPGA is the largest association of river users within Alaska with the support of your membership. Membership dues fund attendance at meetings in Anchorage, Juneau and other locations in the Alaska, as needed.

In the next few meetings, KRPGA will discuss issues in the fishery and proposals to Board of Fish that will come directly from KRPGA. With over 200 guides on the Kenai River, we all have concerns and issues that affect this industry. If possible, we need to get our individual ideas on paper and work together to form and propose some sensible solutions. This will take a team effort. The Board looks forward to forming working groups to focus on specific concerns of the complex Kenai fishery.

Our Board of Directors will continue to do our best to represent the professional in-river guide industry on the Kenai Peninsula. There will be disagreements among in-river user groups. However, we must all, as in-river fishermen, decide at some point decide to stand together and agree on major issues.

In the 2018 season, Kenai River guides had to be flexible with our clients and fishing methods. Having gone through a change in management going directly into the continuous part of our season was interesting to say the least. For those who do not know, ADFG could not find someone to fill the Southcentral Commercial Fisheries Regional Management Coordinator position and therefore offered a \$10,000 raise to encourage applicants. At this point, the acting sportfish regional manager left to take the commercial fisheries regional manager position and Matt Miller took the position as the Southcentral Sport Fisheries Regional Management Coordinator.

From mid-June through July, the KRPGA Board of Directors met weekly Monday mornings with ADFG. I want to thank them for making time during their busy schedule to do so. I feel that had we not met with ADFG on a face-to-face basis, asking questions about the situation with both the king salmon run and low number of sockeye, the commercial nets would have fished even more time than they did.

With the in-river restrictions on King salmon and low sockeye number, commercial fish did fish, however, they did not fish all hours allowed in the management plan. Somehow, commercial fisheries managed to harvest approximately 750,000 sockeye salmon during the season which put the Kenai River well behind its escapement goals and made in-river fishing extremely challenging in July.

Moving into the first week of August, fishing for silvers was somewhat successful with a few, very few sockeye, but thousands of pinks. Once again, in early August, the KRPGA Board met with ADFG with major concerns on number of sockeye that were recorded at the sonar, versus pinks and silvers. ADFG has one method of apportionment. It is a fish wheel, of which I personally have little faith in. This is something the Association will be working; how to gather data with other means and methods to determine each species of fish are passing the sonar, especially on pink salmon return years.

With the one day "spike" of sockeye around August 18, somehow commercial fisheries managed to put the nets back in the water August 23rd completely going outside the management plan; no commercial fishing past August 20th. Why this decision was made (ironically the day before the Kenai River Classic) is beyond belief. This emergency opener had an impact on in-river fishing in the days following.

With the season close to wrapping up for 2018, September fishing was decent but not epic. For those who fish into the late season in October...good luck.

The KRPGA Board would like to see a full house of folks at the October meeting as we will have some guest speakers. The Association looks forward to November's important upcoming officer elections. As a reminder, meetings are held the second Tuesday of the off-season months.

Thank you for being a member and encourage non-guides to become an Associate Member. Associate Members can be support industries, local and non-local businesses, friends and families.

Hope to see you on October 9th at 6:00 pm at the 4D Professional Building!

Keep a tight line,



Announcements:

2018-2019 Memberships are now due. Please return your membership form and payment to the office.

KRPGA is working on a date for fall fundraiser or holiday gathering. Stay on the lookout for an announcement.

KRPGA has officially announced their support of gubernatorial candidate Mike Dunleavy.



CONTACT US

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Association**

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We have a new administrator!

Please welcome,

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KRPGA

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