

5 AAC 21.359. Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan.

RC 58

(a) The purposes of this management plan are to ensure an adequate escapement of late-run king salmon into the Kenai River system and to provide management guidelines to the department. The department shall manage the late-run Kenai River king salmon stocks primarily for sport and guided sport uses in order to provide the sport and guided sport fishermen with a reasonable opportunity to harvest these salmon resources over the entire run, as measured by the frequency of inriver restrictions.

(b) The department shall manage the late run of Kenai River king salmon to achieve an optimal escapement goal of 15,000 – 30,000 with a [BIOLOGICAL] sustainable escapement goal of [17,800 – 35,000] 13,000 – 28,000 king salmon, as follow:

(1) in the sport fishery,

(A) if the [BIOLOGICAL] sustainable escapement goal is projected to be exceeded, the commissioner may, by emergency order, extend the sport fishing season up to seven days during the first week of August;

(B) from July 1 through July 31, a person may not use more than one single hook in the Kenai River downstream from Skilak Lake;

(2) in the sport fishery, that portion of the Kenai River downstream from Skilak Lake is open to unguided sport fishing from a non-motorized vessel on Mondays in July; for purposes of this section a non-motorized vessel is one that does not have a motor on board;

(3) on or after July 21, if the projected in-river return is less than [17,800] 15,000 king salmon the department [SHALL] may manage for the lower bound range of the SEG,

(A) [CLOSE THE SPORT FISHERIES IN THE KENAI RIVER AND IN THE SALT WATERS OF COOK INLET NORTH OF THE LATITUDE OF BLUFF POINT TO THE TAKING OF KING SALMON] if the projected inriver return of late-run king salmon is less than 20,000 fish and the inriver sport fishery harvest is projected to result in an escapement below 13,000 king salmon, the department may, by emergency order, implement one or more of the following management measures for conservation purposes:

(i) prohibit the use of bait in the sport fisheries in the Kenai River;

(ii) prohibit the retention of king salmon in the sport fisheries in the Kenai River;

(iii) prohibit the retention of sport caught king salmon in the salt waters of Cook Inlet north of the latitude of bluff point;

(iv) prohibit the retention of king salmon in the personal use fisheries in the Kenai River;

(v) close the commercial drift gillnet fishery in the Central District within one mile of the Kenai Peninsula shoreline north of the Kenai River and within one and one-half miles of the Kenai Peninsula shoreline south of the Kenai River;

(vi) in the commercial set gillnet fishery, reduce the allowable emergency order hours per week in regulation as specified in 5AAC 21.360 and 5AAC 21.365 by one-half;



(vii) if allowable emergency order hours are limited as described in (vi) time and area restrictions as defined in 5 AAC 21.360 and 5 AAC 21.365 for the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery in the Central District shall not be implemented;

(viii) establish a non-retention king salmon season in the commercial set gillnet fisheries in the Upper Subdistrict of the Central District;

(ix) in the Upper Subdistrict of the Central District a commercial set gillnet CFEC permit holder may take but may not sell king salmon during periods established by emergency order.

(B) [CLOSE THE COMMERCIAL DRIFT GILLNET FISHERY IN THE CENTRAL DISTRICT WITHIN ONE MILE OF THE KENAI PENINSULA SHORELINE NORTH OF THE KENAI RIVER AND WITHIN ONE AND ONE-HALF MILES OF THE KENAI PENINSULA SHORELINE SOUTH OF THE KENAI RIVER; AND] if on or after July 21, the department projects an inriver spawning escapement action point of 15,000 or more king salmon in the Kenai River, the provisions in (b) (3) (A) shall not apply.

(C) (DELETE)

(c) [FROM JULY 20 THROUGH JULY 31] the provisions as defined in (b) (3) (A) shall sunset on December 31, 2013;

(1) repealed 6/22/2002;

(2) [DELETE]

(3) repealed 6/22/2002;

(4) [DELETE]

(5) repealed 6/11/2005

(d) Repealed 6/22/2002

(e) Consistent with the purposes of this management plan and 5 AAC 21.360, if the projected inriver return of king salmon is less than 40,000 fish, the department may not reduce the closed waters at the mouth of the Kenai River described in 5 AAC 21.350 (b).

(f) The provisions of the Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan (5 AAC 21.365) are exempt from the provisions of this section.

(g) The department will to the extent practicable, conduct habitat assessments on a schedule that conforms to the Board of Fisheries (board) triennial meeting cycle. If the assessments demonstrate a net loss of riparian habitat caused by noncommercial fishermen, the department is requested to report those findings to the board and submit proposals to the board for appropriate modification of this plan.

(h) The commissioner may depart from the provisions of the management plan under this section as provided in 5 AAC 21.363 (c).

Paul A. Shadura II SOKI 03.20.13