

Kenai Early Run King Rebuilding Strategy

RC 181

Substitute Language for Proposal #149

Submitted by: *Kenai River Sportfishing Association
Kenai River Professional Guides Association
Kenai Area Fishermen's Coalition*

Goals

SEG = 2,800 – 5,600 (75 cm mid eye to tail fork and longer)

OEG = 3,900 – 6,600 (75 cm mid eye to tail fork and longer)

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|-------------------------|
| ADFG numbers |
|-------------------------|

Lower River (Downstream from the Slikok Sanctuary, Jan 1 – June 30)

1. If the preseason forecast exceeds the lower bound of the SEG, the department may begin the season:
 - a) with no bait/no retention, or
 - b) with no bait / retention if projecting escapements within the OEG range.

Maximum size limit 36 inches in length.

2. At such time as run strength can be assessed inseason:

If the projected run size is less than the OEG: closed

If the projected run size is within the OEG:

- a. with no bait/no retention, or
- b. with no bait.

Maximum size limit 36 inches in length.

If the projected run size exceeds the OEG:

- a) all sizes may be retained.
- b) may be opened to the use of bait.

Middle River (Upstream from the Slikok sanctuary, Jan 1 – July 31)

3. If the preseason forecast exceeds the lower bound of the SEG, the department may begin the season:
 - a. with no bait/no retention, or
 - c. with no bait / retention if projecting escapements within the OEG range

Maximum size limit 36 inches in length.

4. At such time as run strength can be assessed inseason:

If the projected run size is less than the OEG: closed

If the projected run size is within the OEG:

- a) with no bait/no retention, or
- b) with no bait.

Maximum size limit 36 inches in length.

If the projected run size exceeds the OEG:

- a) with no bait/no retention, or
- b) with no bait.

Maximum size limit 36 inches in length.

Misc.

5. Drop provision for retaining 55 inches or greater in length.
6. Quit fishing when a fish is retained.
7. No change in seasonal limit.

5 AAC 57.160 Kenai River and Kasilof River Early-run King Salmon Management Plan

- (a) The purpose of this management plan is to ensure an adequate escapement of early-run king salmon into the Kenai and Kasilof Rivers, to conserve the unique large size early-run king salmon in the Kenai River, and to provide the department with management guidelines.
- (b) The department shall manage the Kenai River early-run king salmon sport and guided sport fisheries to achieve the optimal escapement goal of **3,900 – 6,600 king salmon 75 cm mid eye to tail fork and longer** [5,300 – 9,000 fish], to provide reasonable harvest opportunities over the entire run, and to ensure the age and size composition of the harvest closely approximates the age and size composition of the run.
- (c) The department shall manage the Kasilof River early-run king salmon sport and guided sport fisheries to achieve the sustainable escapement goal, to provide reasonable harvest opportunities over the entire run while ensuring adequate escapement of naturally-produced king salmon, and to minimize the effects of conservation actions for the Kenai River on the Kasilof River.
- (d) In the Kenai River, ~~[(1)]~~ the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and other special provisions for king salmon set out in 5 AAC 57.120(a)(2)(i) and (iii), the provision in 5 AAC 57.120 - 5 AAC 57.123 and in (4) of this subsection.

~~[(2) IF THE SPAWNING ESCAPEMENT IS PROJECTED TO BE LESS THAN THE LOWER END OF THE OPTIMAL ESCAPEMENT GOAL, THE COMMISSIONER SHALL, BY EMERGENCY ORDER, RESTRICT AS NECESSARY THE TAKING OF KING SALMON IN THE SPORT AND GUIDED SPORT FISHERIES IN THE KENAI RIVER TO ACHIEVE THE OPTIMAL ESCAPEMENT GOAL USING ONE OF THE FOLLOWING METHODS:~~

~~(A) PROHIBIT THE RETENTION OF KING SALMON LESS THAN 55 INCHES IN LENGTH, EXCEPT KING SALMON LESS THAN 20 INCHES IN LENGTH, DOWNSTREAM FROM AN ADF&G REGULATORY MARKER LOCATED AT THE OUTLET OF SKILAK LAKE THROUGH JUNE 30, AND REQUIRE THAT UPSTREAM FROM AN ADF&G REGULATORY MARKER LOCATED APPROXIMATELY 300 YARDS DOWNSTREAM FROM THE MOUTH OF SLIKOK CREEK TO AN ADF&G REGULATORY MARKER LOCATED AT THE OUTLET OF SKILAK LAKE, FROM JULY 1 THROUGH JULY 14, ONLY ONE UNBAITED, BARBLESS, SINGLE HOOK, ARTIFICIAL LURE, AS DESCRIBED IN 5 AAC 57.121(1) (J), MAY BE USED WHEN SPORT FISHING FOR KING SALMON AND ONLY KING SALMON LESS THAN 20 INCHES IN LENGTH AND 55 INCHES OR GREATER IN LENGTH MAY BE RETAINED; OR~~

~~(B) CLOSE THE SPORT AND GUIDED SPORT FISHERIES TO THE TAKING OF KING SALMON IN THE KENAI RIVER~~

~~(I) DOWNSTREAM FROM AN ADF&G REGULATORY MARKER LOCATED AT THE OUTLET OF SKILAK LAKE THROUGH JUNE 30; AND~~

~~(II) FROM JULY 1 THROUGH JULY 14, UPSTREAM FROM AN ADF&G REGULATORY MARKER LOCATED APPROXIMATELY 300 YARDS DOWNSTREAM FROM THE MOUTH OF SLIKOK CREEK TO AN ADF&G REGULATORY MARKER LOCATED AT THE OUTLET OF SKILAK LAKE;~~

~~(3) IF THE SPAWNING ESCAPEMENT IS PROJECTED TO FALL WITHIN THE OPTIMAL ESCAPEMENT GOAL, THE COMMISSIONER MAY, BY EMERGENCY ORDER, LIBERALIZE THE SPORT FISHERY DOWNSTREAM FROM AN ADF&G REGULATORY MARKER LOCATED AT THE OUTLET OF SKILAK LAKE, BY ALLOWING THE USE OF BAIT IF THE DEPARTMENT PROJECTS THAT THE TOTAL HARVEST UNDER A LIBERALIZED SPORT FISHERY WILL NOT REDUCE THE SPAWNING ESCAPEMENT BELOW THE OPTIMAL ESCAPEMENT GOAL; ONLY KING SALMON LESS THAN 42 INCHES IN LENGTH OR 55 INCHES OR GREATER IN LENGTH MAY TO BE RETAINED;~~

~~(4) A PERSON MAY NOT POSSESS, TRANSPORT, OR EXPORT FROM THIS STATE, A KING SALMON 55 INCHES OR GREATER IN LENGTH TAKEN FROM THE KENAI RIVER FROM JANUARY 1 THROUGH JULY 31, UNLESS THE FISH HAS BEEN SEALED BY AN AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE OF THE DEPARTMENT WITHIN THREE DAYS AFTER THE TAKING; THE PERSON TAKING THE FISH MUST SIGN THE SEALING CERTIFICATE AT THE TIME OF SEALING; THE SEAL MUST REMAIN ON THE FISH UNTIL THE PRESERVATION OR TAXIDERMY PROCESS HAS COMMENCED; A PERSON MAY NOT FALSIFY ANY INFORMATION REQUIRED ON THE SEALING CERTIFICATE; IN THIS PARAGRAPH,~~

~~(A) "SEALING" MEANS THE PLACEMENT OF AN OFFICIAL MARKER OR LOCKING TAG (SEAL) BY AN AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE OF THE DEPARTMENT ON A FISH AND MAY INCLUDE~~

~~(I) COLLECTING AND RECORDING BIOLOGICAL INFORMATION CONCERNING THE CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH THE FISH WAS TAKEN;~~

~~(II) MEASURING THE SPECIMEN SUBMITTED FOR SEALING; AND~~

~~(III) RETAINING SPECIFIC PORTIONS OF THE FISH FOR BIOLOGICAL INFORMATION, INCLUDING SCALES, FIN RAYS, AND VERTEBRAE;~~

~~(B) "SEALING CERTIFICATE" MEANS A FORM USED BY THE DEPARTMENT FOR RECORDING INFORMATION WHEN SEALING A FISH.]~~

(e) From January 1 – June 30 in the Kenai River from its mouth upstream to the ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 300 yards downstream from the mouth of Slikok Creek;

(1) if the spawning escapement is projected, based on the preseason forecast, to be less than the lower end of the sustainable escapement goal of 2,800 – 5,600 king salmon 75 cm mid eye to tail fork and longer, the commissioner may, by emergency order, close the sport and guided sport fisheries to the taking of king salmon.

(2) if the spawning escapement is projected, based on the preseason forecast, to exceed the lower end of the sustainable escapement goal of 2,800 – 5,600 king salmon 75 cm mid eye to tail fork and longer, the commissioner may, by emergency order, restrict as necessary the taking of king salmon in the sport and guided sport fisheries in the Kenai River to achieve the optimal escapement goal using one of the following methods:

(A) prohibit the retention of king salmon, except king salmon less than 20 inches in length; or

(B) prohibit the retention of king salmon, except king salmon less than 36 inches in length, and require only one unbaited, barbless, single-hook, artificial lure, as described in 5 AAC 57.121(1) (J), may be used when sport fishing for king salmon.

(3) At such time as run strength can be assessed inseason,

(A) if the spawning escapement is projected to be less than the optimum escapement goal, the commissioner may, by emergency order, close the sport and guided sport fisheries to the taking of king salmon.

(B) if spawning escapement is projected to exceed the lower end of the optimum escapement goal, the commissioner may, by emergency order, restrict as necessary the taking of king salmon in the sport and guided sport fisheries in the Kenai using one or more of the following methods:

(i) prohibit the retention of king salmon, except king salmon less than 20 inches in length;

(ii) prohibit the retention of king salmon, except king salmon less than 36 inches in length;

(iii) require only one unbaited, barbless, single-hook, artificial lure, as described in 5 AAC 57.121(1) (J), may be used when sport fishing for king salmon.

(C) if the spawning escapement is projected to exceed the upper end of the optimal escapement goal, the commissioner may, by emergency order, liberalize the sport fishery by:

(i) allowing the use of bait while fishing for king salmon, and

(ii) allowing retention of king salmon of all sizes.

(f) From January 1 – July 31 in the Kenai River upstream from the Sterling Highway bridge to an ADF&G regulatory marker located at the mouth of Skilak Lake; **(is there a bubble on the bank below the bridge?)**

(1) if the spawning escapement is projected, based on the preseason forecast, to be less than the lower end of the sustainable escapement goal of 2,800 – 5,600 king salmon 75 cm mid eye to tail fork and longer, the commissioner may, by emergency order, close the sport and guided sport fisheries to the taking of king salmon.

(2) if the spawning escapement is projected, based on the preseason forecast, to exceed the lower end of the sustainable escapement goal of 2,800 – 5,600 king salmon 75 cm mid eye to tail fork and longer, the commissioner may, by emergency order, restrict as necessary the taking of king salmon in the sport and guided sport fisheries in the Kenai to achieve the optimal escapement goal using one of the following methods:

(A) prohibit the retention of king salmon, except king salmon less than 20 inches in length; or

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(B) if spawning escapement is projected to exceed the lower end of the optimum escapement goal, the commissioner may, by emergency order, restrict as necessary the taking of king salmon in the sport and guided sport fisheries in the Kenai using one or more of the following methods:

(i) prohibit the retention of king salmon, except king salmon less than 20 inches in length;

(ii) prohibit the retention of king salmon, except king salmon less than 36 inches in length;

(iii) require only one unbaited, barbless, single-hook, artificial lure, as described in 5 AAC 57.121(1) (J), may be used when sport fishing for king salmon.

(g) [(e)] In the Kasilof River, the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and other special provisions for king salmon are set out in 5 AAC 56.120(1) and 5 AAC 56.122(a) (8).

Note: This will also require modifications to 5 AAC 57.120 (2)(A)(i) and (iii) to align size limits and sealing requirement as modified above under 57.160.