

Submitted by Board Member Ruffner
March 6, 2017

Substitute Language for Proposal 149

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 length 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 are set out in 5 AAC 57.120 — 5 AAC 57.123 [AND IN (4) OF THIS SUBSECTION];

(2) **from January 1 — June 30, from its mouth upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 300 yards downstream from the mouth of the Slikok Creek,**

(A) if the **preseason forecast projects the inriver run** [SPAWNING ESCAPEMENT IS PROJECTED] to be less than the lower end of the **sustainable** [OPTIMAL] escapement goal **of 2,800—5,600 king salmon 75 cm mid eye to tail fork length and longer**, the commissioner shall, by emergency order, **close the sport and guided sport fisheries to the taking of king salmon** [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:];

(B) if the preseason forecast projects the inriver run to be above the lower end of the sustainable escapement goal but below the lower end of the optimal escapement goal, the commissioner may, by emergency order, restrict the sport and guided sport fisheries using one of the following methods;

(i) close the sport and guided sport fisheries to the taking of king salmon; or

(ii) prohibit the retention of king salmon;

(C) if the preseason forecast projects the inriver run to be within or above the optimal escapement goal range, the fishery may start as described in 5 AAC 57.120 (2)(A)(i);

(D) if the inseason inriver run projection is below the lower end of the optimal escapement goal, the commissioner shall, by emergency order, close the sport and guided sport fisheries to the taking of king salmon;

(E) if the inseason inriver run projection is within the optimal escapement goal range, the commissioner shall, by emergency order in the sport and guided sport fisheries;

(i) prohibit the retention of king salmon; or

(ii) open the sport and guide sport fisheries as described in 5 AAC 57.120 (2)(A)(i);

(F) if the inseason inriver run projection exceeds the optimal escapement goal range, the commissioner may, by emergency order liberalize the sport and guided sport fisheries using one or more of the following methods;

(i) allow the use of bait;

(ii) modify the maximum size limit allowed for harvest;

(3) from January 1 — July 31, from an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 300 yards downstream from the mouth of the Slikok Creek upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located at the outlet of Skilak Lake,

(A) if the preseason forecast projects the inriver run 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 length and longer, the commissioner shall, by emergency order, close the sport and guided sport fisheries to the taking of king salmon;

(B) if the preseason forecast projects the inriver run to be above the lower end of the sustainable escapement goal but below the lower end of the optimal escapement goal, the commissioner may, by emergency order, restrict the sport and guided sport fisheries using one of the following methods;

(i) close the sport and guided sport fisheries to the taking of king salmon; or

(ii) prohibit the retention of king salmon;

(C) if the preseason forecast projects the inriver run to be within or above the optimal escapement goal range, the fishery may start as described in 5 AAC 57.120 (2)(A)(i);

(D) if the inseason inriver run projection is below the lower end of the optimal escapement goal, the commissioner shall, by emergency order, close the sport and guided sport fisheries to the taking of king salmon;

(E) if the inseason inriver run projection is within the optimal escapement goal, the commissioner shall, by emergency order in the sport and guided sport fisheries;

(i) prohibit the retention of king salmon; or

(ii) open the sport and guide sport fisheries as described in 5 AAC 57.120 (2)(A)(i);

(F) if the inseason inriver run projection exceeds the optimal escapement goal range, the commissioner may, by emergency order liberalize the sport and guided sport fisheries by modifying the maximum size limit allowed for harvest;

[(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 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.]

Note: This will also require modifications to 5 AAC 57.120. (2)(A)(i) and (iii) and 5 AAC 57.121. (1)(A) to align size limits and sealing requirements as modified above under 5 AAC 57.160.