

**SOUTHEAST ALASKA KING SALMON ISSUES-APRIL 28, 2008**  
**Prepared by the Department of Fish and Game**

The Southeast Alaska king salmon sport fishery is managed under the directives of the Southeast Alaska King Salmon Management Plan (5 AAC 47.055). This plan prescribes management measures implemented by the department for the king salmon sport fishery based upon the preseason abundance index determined by the Chinook Technical Committee of the Pacific Salmon Commission. The preseason abundance index for the 2008 season is 1.07 which equates to 31,350 king salmon allocated to the sport fishery. This is a 48% reduction in the number of king salmon allocated to the sport fishery in 2007. The department issued emergency order 1-KS-R-03-08 on April 9 which enacted all management measures prescribed in the plan for abundance indices below 1.1 and above 1.0. The management measures in the plan that reduce king salmon harvest at abundance indices below 1.1 were substantially modified in 2003. This is the first time any of these restrictions have been used since 2003. Even with the action taken it is possible that the sport fishery will exceed its allocation.

Since implementation of the emergency order questions have arisen within the department and from the public pertaining to the August exception for the Juneau sport fishing derby and how the 4 line limit should be applied. The Department is seeking clarification on the implementation of these management measures. Additionally, the department was asked by a board member if the sport fishery treaty harvest could be estimated in late July in order to determine if the harvest restrictions during August 1 – September 30 need to be implemented.

**1. Golden North Salmon Derby**

The April 8 emergency order (1-KS-R-03-08) implements an exception for the Juneau derby from regionwide restrictions by allowing a bag and possession limit of one king salmon, 28 inches or greater in length within the Juneau derby boundaries August 15 through the 25. (See map of derby area in attached April 8 news release.)

The exempted dates for the derby in the current management plan are August 15-25. The Golden North Salmon Derby is now conducted annually on or close to August 8, 9, and 10.

The 2003-2007 average king salmon harvest during the Golden North salmon Derby was 469 fish with about 40% of them Alaska hatchery (so an average of about 280 treaty king salmon are harvested in the derby).

A proposal has been submitted to address this issue at the next board of fisheries Southeast finfish meeting in February, 2009.

## **2. Prohibition on the possession or retention of king salmon less than 48 inches in length by all anglers August 1 through September 30.**

The annual sport harvest of king salmon (of treaty concern) is approximately 85-90% complete by July 31.

Limiting residents and nonresidents to one king salmon 48 inches or greater in length from August 1 through September 30, as currently enacted by emergency order, is estimated to decrease treaty harvest by 4,400 fish (12%).

If this same restriction was applied only to nonresidents the estimated decrease in treaty harvest is estimated to be 3,400 fish (9%).

If the resident bag and possession limit was one king salmon 28 inches or greater in length August 1 through September 30 the resident treaty harvest is estimated to be 1,000 fish (3%).

## **3. The maximum number of lines that may be fished from a charter vessel**

Emergency order 1-KS-R-03-08 reduced the maximum number of lines that may be fished from a charter vessel from 6 lines to 4 lines from May 1 through June 30. The emergency order was written to implement this 4 line limit when fishing for any species, not just when chartered anglers were fishing specifically for king salmon. This interpretation was based on wording in the plan and enforcement concerns.

Since the implementation of the emergency order questions have arisen within the department and from the public pertaining to how the 4 line limit should be applied - four lines from charter vessels when fishing for any species vs. four lines from charter vessels when fishing specifically for king salmon.

A reduction of the line limit from 6 to 4 lines is estimated to decrease treaty harvest by 800 fish (2%).