

Issues related to RC 151

Why are there numbers in this plan that are not escapement goals? Goals are goals and everywhere in Alaska, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game very successfully manages to escapement goals without goals within goals.

By voting yes and implementing a 22,500 in-river late run king target and putting a goal of 16,500 into effect beginning in August, you have effectively allocated 7,500 kings from the ESSN to the in-river fishery not only in July but after the in-river fishery season has closed in August. The collateral damage of that action is loss of opportunity for the Setnet fishery to take more than a million sockeye.

Shortly before adoption of 151, the BOF reconsidered and reversed the decision to adopt an OEG on the late run king plan of 16,600 to 30,000. The reason given for that reconsideration was trust in the department's conservative management style. Clearly your intent and action was to leave the OEG at 15,000 as supported by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

By adopting 151, the BOF reversed that ruling and unintentionally reinstated an OEG of 16,500. This forces the department to manage the East Side Setnet fishery to higher goal than is the in-river fishery, and the burden of meeting that higher goal is borne by the fishery that is not the primary harvester.

The effect of this decision will further restrict the ability of the east side setnetters to harvest sockeye and the department's ability to fish adaptively on abundance.

More importantly, this will likely shutdown the east side Setnet fishery even when we're within the department's SEG of 15,000 to 30,000 kings.

Management objectives are achieved at the end of the season. If managers manage to 15,000 prior to August 1, they will automatically be well under the goal when the new, higher goal goes into effect. Fishing subsequently will be closed. In fact, it forces the department to manage the commercial fishery to 16,500 kings for the entire season, since 16,500 is the goal the department must hit at the end of the year. This is punitive to the East Side Setnet fishery.

What we need:

Remove the in-river goal of 22,500 and replace it with an in-river goal of 17,000. ((In 2013 the inriver harvest was 1,600, this gives the inriver users 2,000 fish, which is 400 more than they harvested last year.))

Remove the 16,500 goal that goes into affect in August. This action will return the goal to the OEG of 15,000 recommended by the Department, the goal that you, as a board, reconsidered and voted back in. By voting in a second goal to go into effect in August, you force the department to the higher goal.