

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

- (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 in-river restrictions.

If restrictions in the sport, personal use, and commercial fisheries are needed to meet the SEG then those restrictions will be shared among all user groups in close proportion to their historical respective harvest. The purpose of this is to create a fair allocation of the burden of conservation and to provide flexibility to the Department in the management of the complex mixed stock fisheries of UCI.

- (b) The department shall manage the late run of Kenai River king salmon to achieve a biological escapement goal of 15,000 – 30,000 king salmon, as follows:
- (1) in the Kenai River sport fishery
 - (A) if the sustainable escapement goal is projected to be exceeded, the commissioner may, by emergency order, increase the harvest potential of the in-river sport fishery by establishing periods by emergency order during which time, season, area, gear and/or bag and possession limits are liberalized
 - (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;
 - (C) the commissioner may, by emergency order, establish periods where bait is prohibited, retention is prohibited, or fishing for king salmon is closed.
 - (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) in the marine sport fishery, the commissioner may by emergency order,
 - (A) establish periods during which bait is prohibited when fishing for king salmon in the salt waters of Cook Inlet north of the latitude of bluff point, at such time as the Kenai River sport fishery is restricted by prohibition of bait;
 - (B) establish periods during which retention is prohibited when fishing for king salmon in the salt waters of Cook Inlet north of the latitude of bluff point, at such time as the Kenai River sport fishery is closed to retention;
 - (C) close the salt waters of Cook Inlet north of an ADF&G regulatory marker located two miles south of the Anchor River at 59°45.94' N. lat. to the taking of king salmon when Kenai River sport fishery is closed to fishing for king salmon.
 - (4) in the Kenai River personal use fishery, the commissioner may by emergency order, prohibit the retention of king salmon when the Kenai River sport fishery is restricted by prohibition of bait, retention or fishing for king salmon.

- (5) in the commercial set gillnet fishery in the Upper subdistrict, the commissioner shall by emergency order,
- (A) restrict fishing periods to no more than 36 hours of aggregate fishing time per week, with a 36-hour continuous closure as described in 5 AAC 21.360(c)(2)(C), when sport fishing for king salmon in the Kenai River is restricted by prohibition of the use of bait;
 - (B) restrict fishing periods to no more than 24 hours of aggregate fishing time per week, when sport fishing for king salmon in the Kenai River is restricted by prohibition of retention;
 - (a) the department may reduce the number of nets from 3 to 2 or 1 OR fish 3 nets at 29 meshes to achieve the burden of conservation requirement for the commercial fisheries.
 - (b) if the final Kenai River sockeye escapement is assured (projected) of exceeding 1.5 million sockeye, the Dept would have the discretion to add 12 additional hours of fishing time in the ESSN fishery. Same gear restrictions in 5 (B)(a). The Friday windows stays and the Tuesday goes away.
 - (C) Catch & Release would remain in effect until July 21 or the Dept makes its in-season projection of less than 15,000. At a projection of less 15,000, the in-river king salmon fishery and the ESSN fishery would close.
 - (D) After July 31 the ESSN fishery may re-open if 15,000 is assured.
 - (a) From 15,000 to 16,500, the ESSN fishery will fish with gear restrictions as per 5(B)(a). The ESSN fishery would get 24 hours per week.
 - (b) From 15,000 to 16,500 if the sonar counter is assured of exceeding 1.5 million sockeye, the Dept would have the discretion to add 12 hours per week, with the same gear restrictions in 5(B)(a).
 - (c) If 16,500 is assured the ESSN fishery will revert back to the Kenai and Kasilof sockeye management plans.
- (6) in the commercial drift net fishery in the Central District, the commissioner may by emergency order, close the fishery 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 when the commercial set gillnet fishery in the Upper subdistrict is closed.

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