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To the Board of Fish 2014

This will be as important as, or more important, than anything else you hear today when it comes to managing the kings in the Kenai.

Run strength has been minimal. The size of the Kenai king is down as much as 50%. The trophy king (70 lb or better) is gone. The jacking rate (jacks) has increased from the normal 10% in 1986 to over 66%.

This year we met the department's escapement numbers, but in fact we had a crash. Of the 15000 plus fish counted more than 66% were sexually mature 1 or 2 ocean males. That leaves approximately 15% older males and only 15% females.

**PROBABLE CAUSE is SELECTIVE HARVEST**

The studies have been done. I have reviewed 9 peer reviewed studies they all suggest or confirm that this is what will happen by removing the largest fish.

- 1) Small run,
- 2) No fish over 70lb.
- 3) A huge jump in the number of jacks.
- 4) Run timing

**Heredity----**

The Kenai king has" .52" heredity factor. A ".5" is considered high. This means the reason we have large late maturing kings is mostly inherited and a smaller part environment. Targeting and removing the large late maturing kings has resulted in more than 50% loss in size since 1987. ---- (ADF&G com fish annual report 2013 p66) Also removing the large fish causes an increased "jacking rate", which has already happened. (Heath p6 ) These large fish are also more fecund ie.( Birkland p1). They produce more offspring which are also more viable. The loss of large kings brings a smaller run and a smaller fish.

The evidence is in. The department has had "0", that's zero, 70 lb kings in the last 4 years and only 1 in the last 6 years. The department says we had over 66 % jacks (ADF&G com fish annual report). The result smaller fish, more jacks, smaller run.

This is not rocket biology. Mate a big fish with a big fish gets a big fish. Mate a small fish with a big fish gets a middle size fish. Mate a small fish with a small fish gets a small fish. But it gets worse. With Kings, mate a jack with an adult female you get mostly jacks.

Hook and release----

These fish are not trout. They cannot go to the bottom and rest for 2 weeks. They are going to die in two weeks and need their energy to spawn before that happens.

- 1) Hooking changes the behavior of all fish.
- 2) Probably 10 to 20% mortality or stopped from spawning. The department reports 8%.
- 3) Removing primarily large fish from the gene pool results in smaller less productive fish.

Please do not let "ACCEPTED PRACTICE" of in river activity set the rules for no debate. Accepted practice in 1980 is not acceptable today.

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If any of you or your aids have time, I would like to discuss heredity and selective harvest and its effect on the Kenai, any time. I will be here through Tuesday.