

PROPOSAL 16 – 5 AAC 58.022. Waters; seasons; bag, possession, annual, and size limits; and special provisions for Cook Inlet–Resurrection Bay Saltwater Area.; and 5 AAC 58.055. Upper Cook Inlet Salt Water Early-run King Salmon Management Plan. Redefine fishing area, species that may be retained, the goal of the *Upper Cook Inlet Saltwater Early-run King Salmon Management Plan*, and eliminate special harvest areas, and clarify that guides and their crew may not fish for king salmon while guiding, as follows:

5 AAC 58.022(b)(1)(A)(iii) is amended to read:

(b)...

(1) in waters of Cook Inlet north of the latitude of Bluff Point (59° 40.00' N. lat.)

(A) king salmon:

...

(iii) in the salt waters of the latitude of the mouth of the Ninilchik River (60° 03.99' N. lat.) to the latitude of Bluff Point (59° 40.00' N. lat.), [AND WITHIN ONE MILE OF SHORE,] a person may not, after taking a king salmon 20 inches or greater in length, fish for **king salmon** [ANY SPECIES OF FISH] on that same day as specified in 5 AAC 58.055(e);

5 AAC 58.055 is amended to read:

5 AAC 58.055. Upper Cook Inlet Salt Water [EARLY-RUN] King Salmon Management Plan. (a) The goal of this management plan is to stabilize the sport harvest of [EARLY-RUN] king salmon in the mixed stock salt water sport fishery in **Upper** [UPPER] Cook Inlet.

(b) **Upper Cook Inlet** [THE EARLY-RUN KING SALMON SPECIAL HARVEST AREA] consists of all salt water south of the latitude of the mouth of the Ninilchik River (60° 03.99' N. lat.) to the latitude of Bluff Point (59° 40.00' N. lat.) [AND WITHIN ONE MILE OF SHORE].

(c) From April 1 through **August 31** [JUNE 30], within the waters described in (b) of this section, a person who is a sport fishing **guide or sport fishing guide crewmember** [GUIDING] may not sport fish **for king salmon** while a client is present or is within the guide's control or responsibility.

...

...

(e) Within the waters described in (b) of this section, from April 1 through **August 31** [JUNE 30], a person may not, after taking a king salmon 20 inches or greater in length, fish for **king salmon** [ANY SPECIES OF FISH] on that same day.

...

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? This proposal seeks to simplify regulations associated with the early-run king salmon fishery. Special Harvest Areas (SHA) and associated regulations were created to reduce harvest of early-run king salmon returning to the Anchor River, Stariski Creek, Deep Creek, and Ninilchik River. Regulations associated with SHAs are difficult to follow and enforce because the 1 mile distance from shore fluctuates with the changing tide cycle. Furthermore, king salmon returning to Cook Inlet streams to spawn also move in and out of the 1-mile corridor with the changing tide.

This plan will simplify the regulations by removing the SHAs while maintaining effective regulations defining the closed areas surrounding the river mouths of the Anchor River, Stariski Creek, Deep Creek, and Ninilchik River. The proposal will also prohibit guides and crew from sport fishing for king salmon while guiding, and prohibit anglers from fishing for king salmon after harvesting a king salmon 20 inches or greater in length. In addition, by extending this plan through August 31 all returning Cook Inlet king salmon stocks migrating through the saltwater area in July and August will be offered some additional protection.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

(HQ-F16-119)
