

I'm Larry Edfelt, a resident of Juneau, and representing about 1300 Territorial Sportsmen. My comments and graphs can be found in RC 15.

I want to speak to the management of Taku River king salmon, a resource that has plummeted in abundance to a far greater extent than the two chinook stocks of concern you will address at this meeting .

For the past ten years the Juneau sport fishery of Taku kings has experienced record low catches. Normal management of commercial and sport fishing has been allowed as if nothing was wrong.

The bar graph in RC 15 presents the Taku River chinook escapement plotted over the past ten years . Also on

the same bar graph, the US catch of Taku chinook for all gear has been added atop the escapement for each year. You will see that the catch plus the escapement for all ten years never got out of the escapement goal range. This means that for the past ten years all we have been doing with our spring sport and commercial fisheries is fishing directly on the escapement. There has been no harvestable surplus.

The status of Taku king salmon has now gone from bad to worse. The escapement of Taku kings in 2017 was only 8500 fish. The minimum goal is 19,000. The outlook for 2018 is even worse at 4700 fish.

Last year the Juneau spring sport fishery was completely closed, while the commercial troll fishery in

northern southeast was cut back but not closed. The result was a bycatch of more than 550 Taku chinook in the troll fishery and 250 Taku kings in the gillnet fisheries , fish that could have enhanced the meager escapement. The department took a scalpel to the troll fishery and sledgehammer to the much smaller sport fishery. The Territorial Sportsmen supported the total sport closure and will continue to do so because of the dire status of the Taku. The larger users of this resource must also contribute as fully to the recovery of Taku kings.

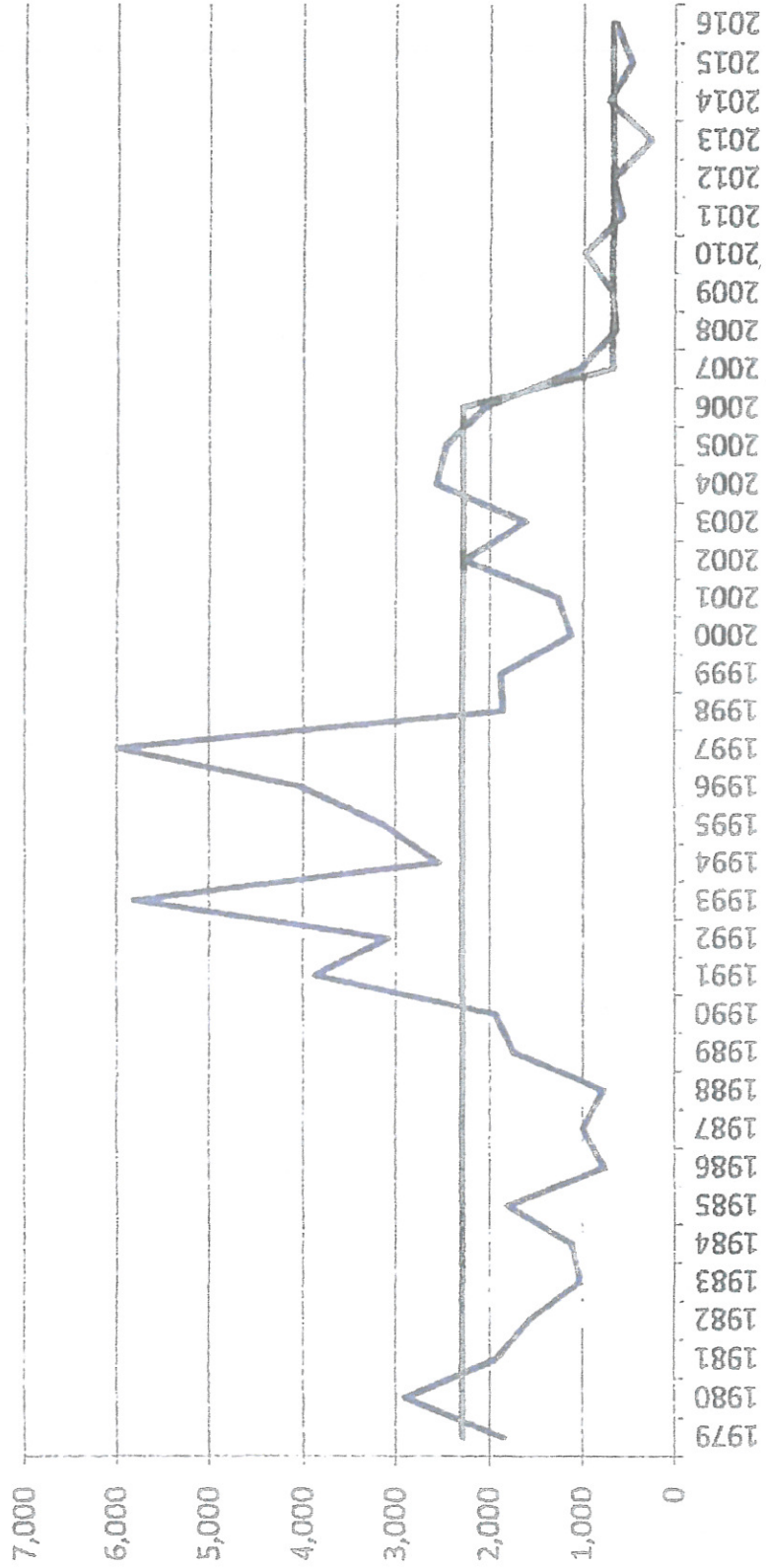
I don't know how deep in the weeds you plan to go with the options on the two stocks of concern. If the Juneau area is closed in the spring and possibly the summer for the next few years to protect Taku fish, then Option A in

the sport fishery is all that's necessary to provide protection to both stocks.

If you choose to impose options B or C, we offer one important amendment. The Board's SE Alaska King Salmon Management Plan established a goal to minimize regulatory restrictions on resident anglers and to allow uninterrupted sport fishing for king salmon in salt water. The way Options B and C are currently written an annual limit of three fish for everyone would be imposed. That is not a restriction for nonresidents as they are already limited to 3 fish. We propose changing the nonresident annual limit to one fish and the resident annual limit to five fish. This action would be consistent with the goals of the management plan, yet would be a major restriction on both residents and nonresidents.

Taku River Sport Harvest 1979-2016

Taku Chinook Sport Harvest in D11



Taku Chinook Salmon Escapement and U.S. Harvest (large)

