

Yakutat Tlingit Tribe

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July 10, 2018

John Jensen, Chairman
Board of Fisheries

We the undersigned, represent the memberships of the Yakutat Tlingit Tribe and Yakutat Fish and Game Advisory Committee of Yakutat with respect to fisheries in this region. We formally request you give immediate consideration to our request on an emergency basis.

Whereas: at the time of writing, 5,016 sockeye salmon, and 77 large Chinook counted through the Situk River weir.

Whereas; the target ranges for escapement of these species is 30,000-50,000 sockeye, and 450-1000 Chinook. We are critically below these thresholds and given the time of year, it is questionable if minimum escapement goals for either species will be met.

Whereas; ADF&G staff at the commercial and sport divisions have recognized this and taken the unprecedented steps to curtail any level of mortality by closing commercial fishing, sport fishing retention, and ultimately, even subsistence harvest.

Whereas; sport fishing on the Situk River in the area above the train trestle, to below the nine mile bridge is still allowed on a catch and release basis.

Be it resolved and agreed upon by the undersigned, that we are not comfortable with any level of potential for mortality of either species, and we ask that sport fishing within the area described, and to include the area below the train trestle which is open only to senior citizens, be closed completely, even to catch and release.

Consideration by ADF&G Sport Fish Division is being given to closing the area known as the "Rodeo hole", which is the holding pool below the weir in which salmon tend to stack up. This is a necessary move, but not enough and we feel that Situk River in its entirety needs to be protected. Given the current lack of enforcement effort on the river system, and given the critically low returns, fish retention and/or mishandling are unacceptable. Numerous anecdotal reports are available of fish being mishandled, and/or outright snagged and/or retained.

We feel that the requested closure should remain in place until such time as minimum escapement goals for both species has been met.

Thank you, for your immediate consideration and concern of this request.

Signed on behalf of the,

Yakutat Tlingit Tribe and Yakutat Fish & Game Advisory Committee.

Yakutat Tlingit Tribe Executive Director

Yakutat Fish and Game AC Chairman

To preserve, maintain and protect the unique culture, land & resources of the Tlingit people
to maximize our social, health & well-being while creating opportunities for our tribe members.

