

**Proposed Kenai River Late-run King Salmon Stock of Concern Action Plan  
Submitted by: Kenai River Sportfishing Association**

This is a rebuilding plan designed to prevent further declines, foster rebuilding, and share the conservation burden among all users.

This plan replaces existing plan Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan [5 AAC 21.359] until such time as the stock is delisted.

This action plan is built on the framework of the current king management plan to ensure this action plan is comprehensive.

**Actions Plan Elements**

General	1. Statement of purpose in preamble.
	2. Criteria for removal of the SOC designation as identified by the Department.
	3. Current OEG as the management goal for the purposes of rebuilding.
	4. Priority for king minimum goal over the upper end of the sockeye goals.
	5. Framework of paired restrictions (with modifications).
Inriver Sport	6. Removal of the bait option in the Kenai River King sport fishery even within the OEG for the duration of the plan.
	7. Bait prohibition in the Coho sport fishery through August 15 when below the OEG.
Marine Sport	8. Status quo (closure as per paired restrictions when below OEG).
Personal use	9. King retention prohibition in the Kenai personal use fishery.
	10. Mesh depth reduction to 15 in the Kasilof gillnet personal use fishery.
Drift gillnet	11. Closure of water inside 2 miles to drift gillnets.
Set gillnet	12. Limits on numbers of set gillnets per permit holder in steps when above the rebuilding goal range.
	13. Reductions in set gillnet depth to 15 mesh.
	14. Fish around low slack up to 8 hr on a day (nets off bottom provision).
	15. Reduction in set gillnet fishing hours in steps when within the OEG.
	16. Scheduled closure window of 48 hours to set gillnet fishing around the weekend.
	17. No provision for set gillnet fishing when projecting between the lower SEG and OEG.
Other	18. Closure of the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area for the duration of this plan.

**5 AAC 21.XXX. Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Stock of Concern Action Plan**

(a) The purpose of this plan is to provide tools and guidelines to the department for the management of Upper Cook Inlet salmon fisheries, while Kenai River late-run River king salmon are listed as a stock of management concern, that will result in sustained yield of king salmon stocks large enough to meet optimal escapement goals while allowing for harvest opportunity in the personal use, sport, and commercial fisheries.

(1) The provisions of this plan are in effect until such time as the stock of management concern designation is removed by the Board of Fisheries. It is the intent of the Board that the designation will remain in place until the lower bound of the optimal escapement goal is met or exceeded in three consecutive or is met in four out of six consecutive years, and is expected to be met in future years.

(2) The provisions of this management plan are in effect from June 20 through August 15.

(b) The department shall manage the late run of Kenai River king salmon to achieve an optimal escapement goal of 15,000 - 30,000 king salmon 75 cm mid eye to tail fork and longer as described in this section. Achieving the lower end of the Kenai late-run king OEG shall take priority over not exceeding the upper ends of the escapement and inriver goal ranges for Kenai and Kasilof River sockeye salmon.

(c) In the sport fishery, from July 1 through July 31

(1) use of bait is prohibited in the Kenai River downstream from an ADF&G regulatory marker located at the outlet of Skilak Lake;

(2) a person may not use more than one single hook in the Kenai River downstream from an ADF&G regulatory marker located at the outlet of Skilak Lake;

(3) that portion of the Kenai River downstream from an ADF&G regulatory marker located at the outlet of Skilak Lake is open to unguided sport fishing from a nonmotorized vessel on Mondays; for purposes of this paragraph, a nonmotorized vessel is one that does not have a motor on board.

(d) If the projected late-run king salmon escapement is less than 15,000 king salmon 75 cm mid eye to tail fork and longer, the department shall

(1) close the sport fisheries in the Kenai River and in the salt waters of Cook Inlet north of the latitude of Bluff Point to the taking of king salmon;

(2) close the commercial set gillnet fishery in the Upper Subdistrict of the Central District,

(3) prohibit the use of bait and multiple hooks in the Kenai River from its mouth upstream to the ADF&G marker at the outlet of Skilak Lake, August 1 through 15. Anglers may use only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure in these waters. "Single-hook" means a fishhook with only one point.

(e) In order to achieve the optimal escapement goal and provide reasonable harvest opportunity, the commissioner may, by emergency order, establish fishing seasons as follows:

(1) in the Kenai River sport fishery,

(A) retention of king salmon 34 inches or greater in length as defined in 5 AAC 75.995(a) is prohibited; or

(B) retention of king salmon is prohibited;

(2) in the Kenai River personal use fisheries, retention of king salmon is prohibited; A Kasilof River personal use set gillnet may not exceed 10 fathoms in length, four and three quarter inches in mesh size, and 15 meshes in depth.

(3) in the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet commercial fishery, notwithstanding the provisions of 5 AAC 21.359, 5 AAC 21.365 and 5 AAC 21.360(c)(1)(B), (2)(B), and (3)(B), based on the abundance of sockeye salmon returning to the Kenai and Kasilof Rivers,

*(A) Fishing in the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet commercial fishing shall occur in a manner that avoids fishing around low slack and is more likely to keep nets off the bottom. No more than 8 hours of fishing may occur on any day. Need appropriate regulatory language*

(B) Each setnet operated by a CFEC permit holder shall be restricted to not more than 35 fathoms in length, 105 fathoms in aggregate length, and 15 meshes in depth.

(C) commercial fishing periods are open for no more than 32 hours per week, with a 48-hour continuous closure per week beginning between 7:00 p.m. Thursday and 7:00 a.m. Friday. The operation of setnets by a CFEC permit holder may be restricted to not more than three set gillnets;

(D) if retention of king salmon greater than 34 inches in length as defined in 5 AAC 75.995(a) are prohibited in the Kenai River sport fishery under (1)(B) of this subsection, commercial fishing periods are open for no more than 24 hours per week, with a 48-hour continuous closure per week beginning between 7:00 p.m. Thursday and 7:00 a.m. Friday; the operation of setnets by a CFEC permit holder shall be restricted to not more than two set gillnets;

(E) if retention of king salmon prohibited in the Kenai River sport fishery under (1)(C) of this subsection, commercial fishing periods are open for no more than 16 hours per week, with a 48-hour continuous closure per week beginning between 7:00 p.m. Thursday and 7:00 a.m. Friday; the operation

of setnets by a CFEC permit holder shall be restricted to not more than one set gillnet;

(F) if preseason restrictions are issued for the late-run Kenai River king salmon sport fishery, then all Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fisheries are restricted;

(G) beginning August 1, Upper Subdistrict set gillnet commercial fishing periods are open for no more than 8 hours per week;

(4) in the Upper Subdistrict drift gillnet commercial fishery, no fishing may occur within two miles from the Kenai Peninsula shoreline.

(f) The Kasilof River Special Harvest Area identified in 5 AAC 21.365(f) Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan shall remain closed for the duration of this plan.

(g) The department will, to the extent practicable, conduct habitat assessments on a schedule that conforms to the Board of Fisheries (board) triennial meeting cycle. The department is requested to report those findings to the board and submit proposals to the board for appropriate modification of this plan.