

An aerial photograph showing a wide river system with multiple channels and a large, light-colored gravel bar in the center. The river is surrounded by dense evergreen forests. In the background, there are rolling hills and a range of snow-capped mountains under a clear blue sky.

***Kenai River King Salmon***

***Assessment Project  
&***

***Management Update***

***RC 5 Tab 5***

# Kenai River king salmon management:

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- **Review transition to DIDSON**
- **Review inseason assessment**
- **Review management**
- **Review sonar results of research to improve inseason assessment**

# Recommendations from 2011 BOF meeting

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- **Transition to DIDSON**
- **Develop DIDSON-based escapement goals**
- **Reduce uncertainty in management during transition**
- **Manage inriver fisheries conservatively**
- **Improve sonar technology, develop goals, relocate sonar**

# Transition to DIDSON update

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- ✓ **2011 to 2013 – generated DIDSON estimates RM 8.6**
- ✓ **2012 – exploration for new site**
- ✓ **2013 – transitioned fully to DIDSON assessment and DIDSON-based goals RM 8.6**
- ✓ **2013 – first year evaluation of new site RM 13.7**

# **In-season Kenai king salmon management: Sonar estimate minus harvest = escapement**

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- ✓ **Inseason run projected from DIDSON estimate**
- ✓ **Inseason harvest estimate projected for run**
- ✓ **Escapement projected inseason: sonar minus harvest**
- ✓ **Escapement goals based on DIDSON**

# Early-run King Salmon Management

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- ❖ **5 AAC 57.160. Kenai River and Kasilof River Early-run King Salmon Management Plan**
  - **Existing Regulations**
  - **Conserve unique large size of early-run fish**
  - **Guidelines to restrict & to liberalize**
  - **To achieve OEG 5,300 – 9,000**

# Late-run King Salmon Management

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- ❖ **5 AAC 21.359. Kenai River Late-run King Salmon Management Plan**
  - **Existing Regulations**
  - **Primarily for inriver sport fishery**
  - **Guidelines to restrict & to liberalize**
  - **To achieve SEG 15,000 – 30,000**

# 2013 Early-run Management

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- ❖ **2013 inseason assessment and management**
  - **Operate RM 8.6 DIDSON to manage both runs**
  - **Expansion factors for each run**
  - **Early-run = 1.55**
  - **2013 escapement = 2,032**

# 2013 Late-run Management

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- ❖ **2013 inseason assessment and management**

- **Late-run = 1.28**

- **2013 escapement = 15,395**

# 2014 Kenai King Salmon Management

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- ❖ **2014 inseason assessment and management**
  - **Operate RM 8.6 sonar to manage both runs**
  - **Use the same expansion factors for each run**
  - **Manage runs for existing goals based on DIDSON**

# 2014 King Salmon Inseason Management

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## ❖ Early-run

- Outlook 2,230 king salmon
- Below historic average of 13,500
- Catch and release fishing
- Early-run conservation thru mid-July

# 2014 King Salmon Inseason Management

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## ❖ Late-run

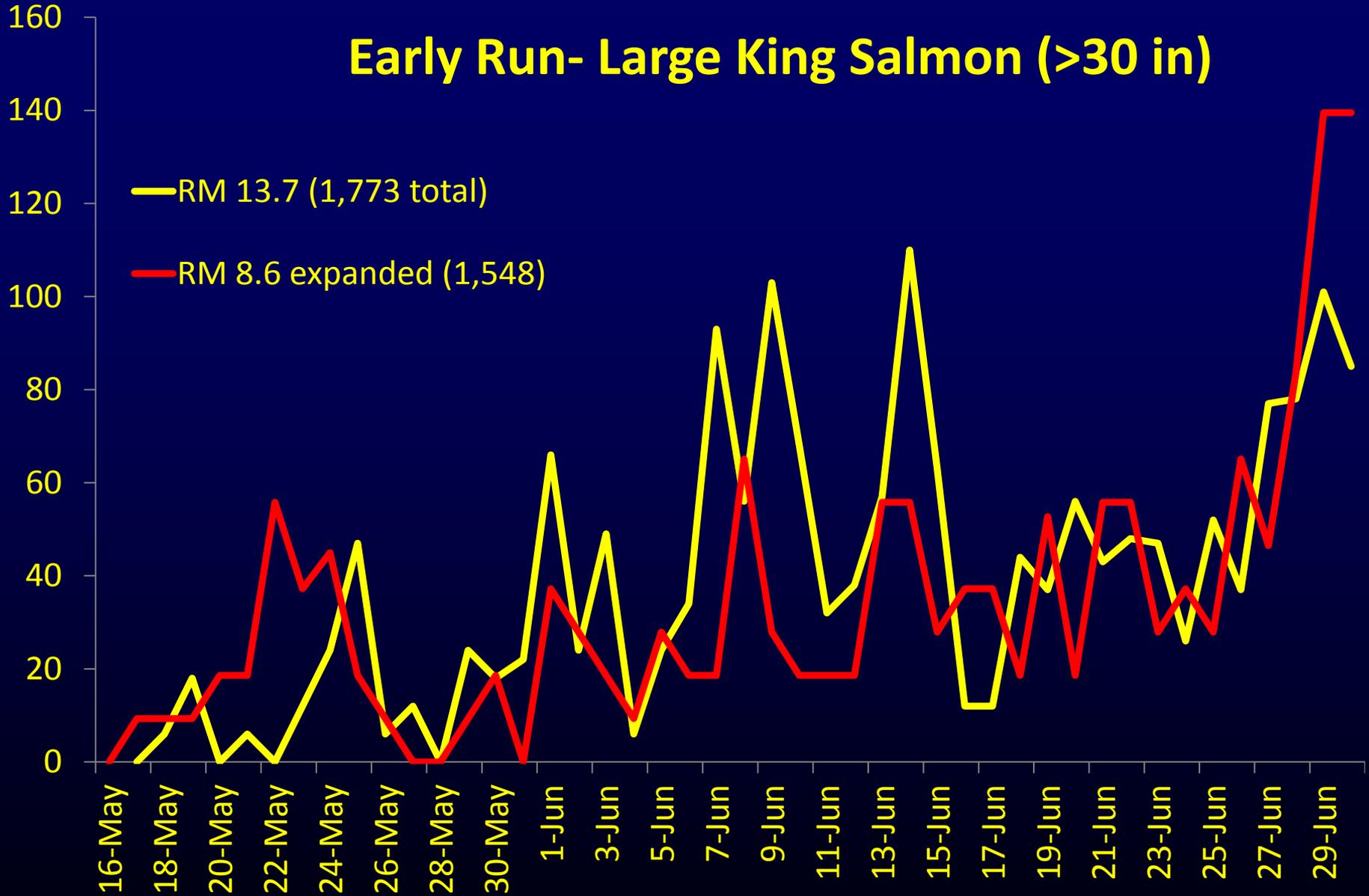
- Outlook 19,700 king salmon
- Below average historic average of 57,000
- Early-run abundance
- No bait for the inriver sport fishery
- Prohibit retention in the Kenai River personal use fishery

# 2014 Sonar & Research

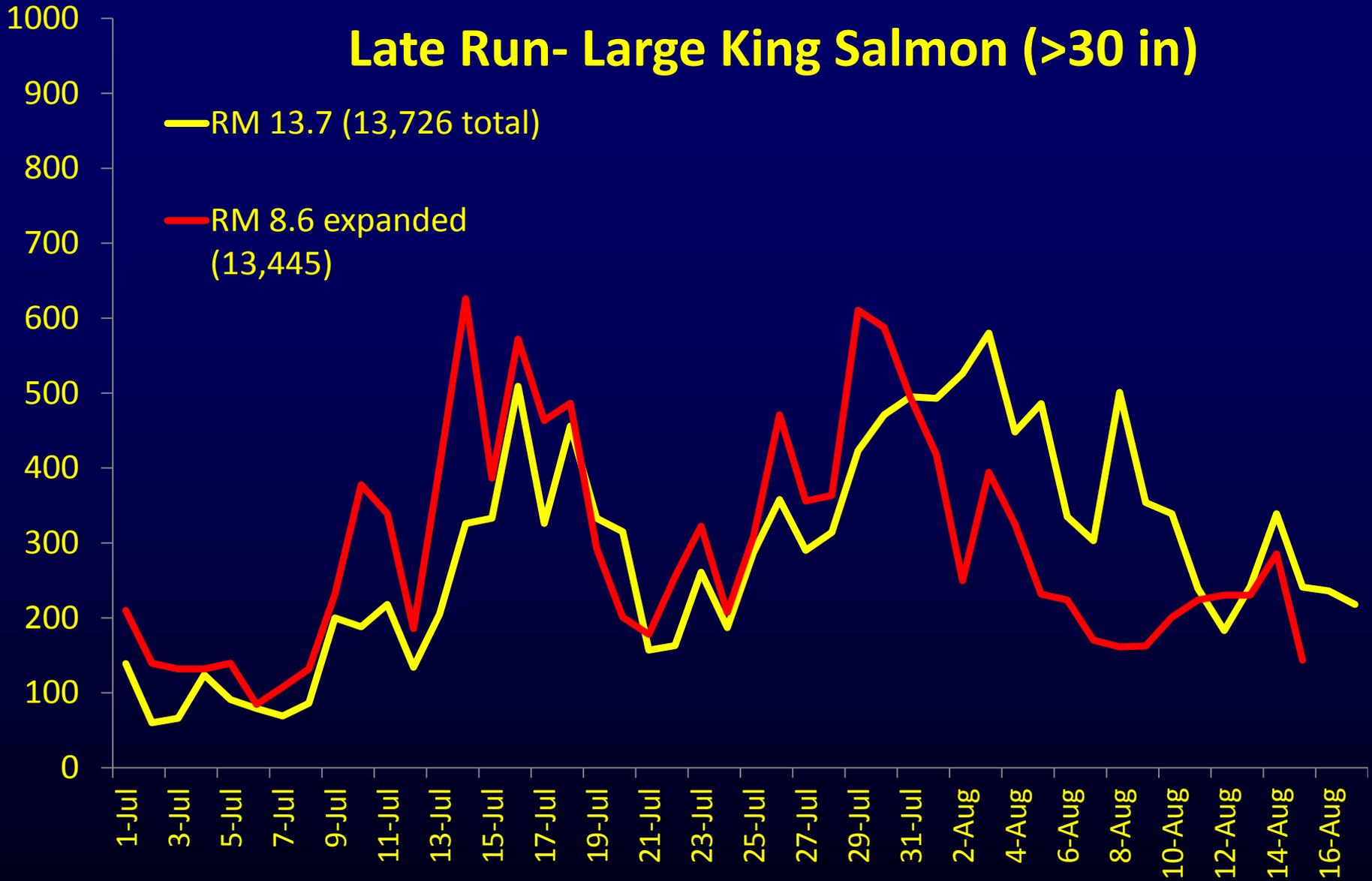
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- ✓ **Run both sites (RM 8.6 and RM 13.7)**
- ✓ **Provide estimates from RM 8.6 for management (top priority)**
- ✓ **Estimate king salmon passage at RM 13.7**

# Early Run- Large King Salmon (>30 in)



# Late Run- Large King Salmon (>30 in)



# 2014 Research Continues

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- **Expand netting program**
- **Run timing differences between RM 8.6 – 13.7**
- **Harvest and spawning below RM 13.7**
- **Collect data thru a variety of conditions at RM 13.7**
- **Information from both sonar sites and tagging data to develop RM 13.7**

# Summary

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- **DIDSON sonar RM 8.6 primary tool**
- **Manage conservatively during low abundance**
- **Operate best available sonar technology RM 13.7**
- **Continue research to develop inseason assessment and escapement goals at RM 13.7**

**Questions?**

