

Submitted by the Alaska Board of Fisheries at the request of Board Member Israel Payton
November 30, 2018

Proposed language for proposal 41:

5 AAC 06.361. Nushagak-Mulchatna King Salmon Management Plan.

(a) The purpose of this management plan is to ensure biological spawning escapement requirements of king salmon into the Nushagak-Mulchatna river systems. It is the intent of the Alaska Board of Fisheries (board) that Nushagak-Mulchatna king salmon be harvested in the fisheries that have historically harvested them. This management plan provides guidelines to the department in an effort to preclude allocation conflicts between the various users of this resource. The department shall manage Nushagak-Mulchatna king salmon stocks in a conservative manner consistent with sustained yield principles and the subsistence priority.

(b) The department shall manage the commercial and sport fisheries in the Nushagak District as follows:

(1) to achieve an inriver goal of 95,000 king salmon present in the Nushagak River upstream from the department sonar counter; the inriver goal provides for

(A) a biological escapement goal of 55,000 - 120,000 fish;

(B) reasonable opportunity for subsistence harvest of king salmon; and

(C) a king salmon sport fishery guideline harvest level of 5,000 fish, 20 inches or greater in length;

(2) in order to maintain a natural representation of age classes in the escapement, the department shall attempt to schedule commercial openings to provide pulses of fish into the river that have not been subject to harvest by commercial gear;

(3) the department may close the commercial drift or set gillnet fishery if the harvest in the directed commercial king salmon fishery for either gear group is more than two sockeye salmon for every one king salmon.

(c) If the total inriver king salmon return in the Nushagak River is projected to exceed 95,000 fish, the guideline harvest level described in (b)(1)(C) of this section does not apply.

(d) If the spawning escapement of king salmon in the Nushagak River is projected to be more than 55,000 fish and the projected inriver return is less than 95,000 fish, the commissioner

(1) shall close, by emergency order, the directed king salmon commercial fishery

in the Nushagak District; during a closure under this paragraph, the use of a commercial gillnet with webbing larger than five and one-half inches in another commercial salmon fishery is prohibited;

(2) [IF THE PROJECTED INRIVER RETURN OF KING SALMON IN THE NUSHAGAK RIVER IS AT LEAST 70,000, BUT LESS THAN 95,000 FISH, AND TO ENSURE THAT THE SPORT FISHERY GUIDELINE HARVEST ESTABLISHED IN (B)(2)(C) OF THIS SECTION IS NOT EXCEEDED, SHALL ESTABLISH, BY EMERGENCY ORDER, A DAILY BAG LIMIT OF ONE FISH PER DAY, ONE IN POSSESSION, FOR KING SALMON 20 INCHES OR GREATER IN LENGTH;] **Repealed.**

(3) [IF THE PROJECTED INRIVER RETURN OF KING SALMON IN THE NUSHAGAK RIVER IS LESS THAN 70,000 FISH, AND TO ENSURE THAT THE PROJECTED SPAWNING ESCAPEMENT DOES NOT FALL BELOW 55,000 FISH, SHALL ESTABLISH, BY EMERGENCY ORDER, FISHING PERIODS TO RESTRICT THE KING SALMON SPORT FISHERY IN THE NUSHAGAK RIVER DURING WHICH ANY, OR A COMBINATION OF THE FOLLOWING RESTRICTIONS MAY BE APPLIED AT THE DISCRETION OF THE COMMISSIONER:

(A) REDUCTION OF BAG AND POSSESSION LIMITS

(i) FROM TWO TO ONE FISH 20 INCHES OR GREATER IN LENGTH; AND

(ii) IF NECESSARY, FROM ONE FISH TO NONRETENTION OF KING SALMON; IF A NONRETENTION FISHERY FOR KING SALMON IS ESTABLISHED UNDER THIS PARAGRAPH, THE USE OF BAIT FOR FISHING FOR ALL SPECIES OF FISH WILL BE PROHIBITED UNTIL THE END OF THE KING SALMON SEASON SPECIFIED IN 5 AAC 67.020 AND 5 AAC 67.022(G);

(B) A SEASONAL LIMIT OF UP TO FOUR FISH 20 INCHES OR GREATER IN LENGTH;

(C) PROHIBITION OF THE USE OF BAIT;

(D) REDUCTIONS IN THE TIME OR AREA FOR FISHING;

(E) A CLOSURE OF THE KING SALMON SPORT FISHERY DURING WHICH THE USE OF BAIT FOR FISHING FOR ALL SPECIES OF FISH WILL BE PROHIBITED UNTIL THE END OF THE KING SALMON SEASON SPECIFIED IN 5 AAC 67.020 AND 5 AAC 67.022(g).] **Repealed.**

(e) If the spawning escapement of king salmon in the Nushagak River is projected to be

less than 55,000 fish, the commissioner

(1) shall close, by emergency order, the sockeye salmon commercial fishery in the Nushagak District until the projected sockeye salmon escapement into the Wood River exceeds 100,000 fish;

(2) shall close, by emergency order, the sport fishery in the Nushagak River to the taking of salmon and prohibit the use of bait for fishing for all species of fish until the end of the king salmon season specified in 5 AAC 67.020 and 5 AAC 67.022(g); and

(3) shall establish, by emergency order, fishing periods during which the time or area is reduced for the inriver king salmon subsistence fishery in the Nushagak River.

(f) Notwithstanding 5 AAC 06.200, in a directed king salmon commercial fishery, the southern boundary of the Nushagak District is a line from an ADF&G regulatory marker located at Etolin Point at 58° 39.37' N. lat., 158° 19.31' W. long., to 58° 33.92' N. lat., 158° 24.94' W. long. to Protection Point at 58° 29.27' N. lat., 158° 41.78' W. long.

(g) During a directed king salmon commercial fishery in the Nushagak District, drift gillnet and set gillnet fishing periods will be of equal length, but do not have to be open concurrently.