

PROPOSAL 119

5 AAC 21.365. Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan.

Eliminate the Kasilof River sockeye salmon optimal escapement goal, as follows:

I recommend the Kasilof River sockeye salmon OEG be eliminated, so 5 AAC 21.365(b) would be amended as follows:

(B) [ACHIEVING THE LOWER END OF THE KENAI RIVER SOCKEYE SALMON ESCAPEMENT GOAL SHALL TAKE PRIORITY OVER NOT EXCEEDING THE UPPER END OF THE KASILOF RIVER OPTIMAL ESCAPEMENT GOAL RANGE OF 160,000 — 390,000 SOCKEYE SALMON.]

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? An OEG of 150,000-300,000 fish for Kasilof River sockeye salmon was first adopted in 2002; the BEG at the time was 150,000-250,000 fish. The reason for the OEG - achieve the lower end of the Kenai River in-river sockeye goal at that timeframe. In both 2000 and 2001, sockeye salmon passage in the Kenai River was near the lower end of the inriver goal of 600,000 fish, while the sockeye salmon BEG in the Kasilof River was exceeded in both years.

In 2011, ADF&G recommended, and the BOF adopted, a new BEG for Kasilof River sockeye salmon of 160,000-340,000 fish and an OEG of 160,000-390,000 fish. The modified BEG represented a 90,000 fish increase on the upper end of the escapement goal, which was 40,000 fish more than the previous OEG. In the 2019 escapement goal memo, ADF&G recommended a BEG for Kasilof River sockeye salmon of 140,000-320,000 fish. If adopted, the upper end of this modified BEG is still 20,000 fish more than the original OEG for this stock.

This proposal seeks to eliminate the OEG for Kasilof River sockeye salmon. Since the OEG was adopted in 2002, the Kasilof River BEG has been exceeded in 14 of 17 years, while the Kenai River inriver goal was exceeded in 13 of 17 years. The need for the additional 50,000 fish buffer the BOF provided for with the original Kasilof River OEG was negated in 2011 with the modified BEG that was 90,000 fish higher than the BEG. The 2019 Kasilof River BEG goal recommendation is still 70,000 more than the original BEG and 20,000 fish more than the original OEG. In keeping with the original intent of the OEG, it is no longer needed because the modified BEG was increased to a level that exceeds the original OEG.

PROPOSED BY: Mark Ducker

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