

**PROPOSAL 219**

**5 AAC XX.XXX. New section.**

Create a *Little Susitna River King Salmon Fishery Management Plan*, as follows:

**5 AAC 60.XXX. Little Susitna River King Salmon Management Plan.**

**(a) The purpose of this management plan is to ensure an adequate escapement of king salmon into the Little Susitna River to provide management guidelines and tools to the department and to provide predictability in management. The intent of the board is that the department will consider the management options listed in this plan prior to considering any other available options for managing the fishery.**

**(b) The Department shall manage the Little Susitna River king salmon sport and guided sport fisheries to achieve the sustainable escapement goal and to provide reasonable harvest opportunities over the entire run. The department shall initiate management of the sport fishery for king salmon in the Little Susitna River based on run sizes of immediate past years and other available abundance indices while minimizing the effects of conservation actions for the Susitna River on the Little Susitna River.**

**(c) In the Little Susitna River.**

**(1) The seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and other special provisions for king salmon are set out in 5 AAC 60.120 -5 AAC 60.122;**

**(2) From January 1 - July 13, from its mouth upstream to the Parks Highway,**

**(A) If pre-season, the run is anticipated to be below the sustainable escapement goal, the commissioner may, by emergency order,**

**(i) Close the sport fishery to the taking of king salmon; or**

**(ii) Prohibit the retention of king salmon;**

**(B) If the pre-season, the run is anticipated to be within or above the sustainable escapement goal the commissioner may, by emergency order,**

**(i) Prohibit the retention of king salmon;**

**(ii) Establish a maximum size limit of 28 inches as measured from tip of snout to tip of tail;**

**(iii) Reduce the annual limit;**

**(iv) restrict days harvest is allowed;**

**(v) Start the fishery as described in 5 AAC 61.112;**

**(3) If the inseason escapement projection is below the sustainable escapement goal, the commissioner may close, by emergency order, the sport fishery to the taking of king salmon;**

**(4) If the inseason escapement projection is within the sustainable escapement goal, the commissioner may, by emergency order,**

**(A) Conduct the season as described in 5 AAC 61.112;**

**(B) Modify the maximum size limit allowed for retention;**

**(5) If the inseason escapement projection is greater than the sustainable escapement goal, the commissioner may, by emergency order, allow use of bait;**

**(d) When retention of king salmon is prohibited or a maximum size limit is in effect the use of multiple-hooks is prohibited.**

**(e) Nothing in this management plan is to be construed as diminishing or affecting the commissioner's authority to modify bag, possession, and annual limits and methods and means by emergency order under 5 AAC 75.003.**

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Adopt a *Little Susitna River King Salmon Fishery Management Plan*. With the downturn in Little Susitna River king salmon production, from 2013 - 2018 the Alaska Department of Fish and Game has increasingly been managing the Little Susitna River sport king salmon fishery by preseason and inseason emergency orders. In 2019 for the first time in over 40 years the Little Susitna River king salmon fishery was entirely closed by preseason emergency order. This management plan proposal is an attempt to document actions currently used in management by the Department, showing when specific actions may occur, and also an attempt to provide an additional tool (the use of a size restriction in the management of the sport fishery). With such a plan sport users will have the opportunity to examine specific management actions the Department has taken or may likely take in the future when managing this resource. In addition, with a plan in regulation, fishermen and other users will have the opportunity to propose changes or tools to use in future Little Susitna River king salmon management.

**PROPOSED BY:** Mat-Su Borough Fish and Wildlife Commission/Mike Wood (HQ-F19-047)  
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