

PROPOSAL 88

5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan.

Amend the *Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan* to increase inriver goal ranges, as follows:

Inriver goal ranges are designed to distribute escapement throughout the SEG according to run size with allowances for sport harvest upstream from the sonar. Sport harvest above the sonar currently ranges from about 200,000 to 400,000 per year depending on the number of sockeye available in river. Higher harvest levels from 250,000 to 500,000 can be expected in the upstream sport fishery with the higher fishing effort expected to accompany consistently higher sonar counts. Proposed revisions of inriver goals are as follows:

Run strength	Old	New
< 2.3 mil	900,000 – 1,100,000	1,000,000 – 1,400,000
2.3-4.6 mil	1,000,000 – 1,300,000	1,200,000 – 1,600,000
> 4.6 mil	1,100,000 – 1,500,000	1,400,000 – 1,800,000
		1,400,000 – 2,000,000*

** Proposed Optimum Escapement Goal in years of Kenai late-run sockeye run sizes greater than 5 million.*

Proposed goals are derived as follows:

- Low end is based on SEG (750,000) plus 250,000 sport catch at low run size.
- High end is based on SEG (1,300,000) plus 500,000 sport catch at high run size.
- Tier widths are 400,000.

Proposed goals address two issues with the previous tiers which have developed over time.

1. The top end goals translate into escapements below the SEG due to growth in the sport fishery upstream from the sonar.
2. Narrow goal ranges are not practical to achieve given variable and uncertain run assessments.
3. The higher top end inriver goal during very large Kenai run sizes recognizes new information on high yields from large escapements and is designed to avoid overharvest of other Chinook and coho stocks in mixed stock commercial fisheries during years of high sockeye abundance.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Recent data on production from large escapements of Kenai River late run sockeye indicates that maximum sustained yield is produced at levels greater than previously thought. Accordingly, ADF&G has recently increased the SEG from 700,000 – 1,200,000 to 750,000 – 1,300,000. The ADF&G analysis actually indicated that maximum yield is produced by escapements around 1.2 million but the escapement goal review committee elected to make only a modest increase in the SEG from previous levels. Inriver goal ranges, as measured in the Kenai River Late-run Sockeye Management plan are based on the SEG and need to be revised accordingly.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai River Sportfishing Association

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