

PROPOSAL 179

5 AAC 75.XXX. New Section.

Establish a statewide annual limit for king salmon of 10 fish, as follows:

Establish a Statewide annual limit of 10 Chinook Salmon larger than 20 inches. All retained Chinook salmon greater than 20 inches must be recorded immediately.

This regulation shall not be interpreted to increase any regional or local bag, possession, or annual limit, but rather to limit anglers taking more than 10 chinook salmon by combining regional limits or by fishing in areas without an annual limit.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The state of Alaska is experiencing significant chinook salmon declines. Currently, most of the state has been closed to king salmon fishing in-river, either by emergency order or regulation change. Ocean fisheries, such as the winter king salmon fishery in Homer, remain as the few holdouts for chinook sport fisheries, but they also need to take a more conservative approach than they currently do.

I am proposing a statewide restriction that does not target one specific area, with the recognition that this is a coastwide issue. Additionally, the proposed limit is still far more liberal than any in-river sport fishery I am aware of. This is to account for the combined factors of mixed stock fisheries and lower chance of spawning for ocean stocks.

In my discussions with ADF&G biologists, a primary drawback for a statewide limit was affecting allocations in the Southeast regions that are part of the Pacific Salmon Treaty. Although I think it is more fair for the limit to apply to the whole state, if the board views the inclusion of Southeast Alaska as a significant drawback, I would welcome an amendment to include only those state waters not covered under the Pacific Salmon Treaty.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. This proposal has been discussed extensively with Department staff from the Douglas, Juneau, Homer, and Anchorage offices, and has been modified to better reflect those management areas, while preserving the intent of the proposal.

PROPOSED BY: Paul Warta

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