

**PROPOSAL 77 – 5 AAC 57.122. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Middle Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area.**

Align the Kenai River tributary fishing closure start dates with the proposed king salmon sanctuaries and rainbow trout spawning closure start dates, and align all Kenai River tributary closures so they have similar fishing seasons, such that anglers are prohibited from fishing for salmon, as follows:

5 AAC 57.122(1) is amended to read:

(1) the following waters of the Middle Section of Kenai River drainage are **closed to sport fishing**, [OPEN TO SPORT FISHING, ONLY] as follows:

(A) from **May 1 – June 10** [JUNE 11 – MAY 1], the Kenai River from the waters of Skilak Lake within a one-half mile radius of the Kenai River inlet, upstream to the downstream edge of the Sterling Highway Bridge at the outlet of Kenai Lake;

(B) from **May 1 – June 10 and from September 15 – October 31, the flowing waters of** [JUNE 11 – SEPTEMBER 14, AND FROM NOVEMBER 1 – MAY 1,] Cooper Creek;

(C) **repealed** / **2017** [FROM JUNE 11 – MAY 1, FLOWING WATERS OF THE RUSSIAN RIVER DRAINAGE UPSTREAM OF A POINT APPROXIMATELY 100 YARDS FROM ITS CONFLUENCE WITH THE KENAI RIVER, EXCLUDING UPPER RUSSIAN (GOAT) CREEK];

(D) **repealed** / **2017** [FROM JULY 15 – MAY 1, THE RUSSIAN RIVER SANCTUARY, INCLUDING WATERS UPSTREAM FROM ADF&G REGULATORY MARKERS LOCATED JUST DOWNSTREAM OF THE FERRY CROSSING ON THE KENAI RIVER TO ADF&G REGULATORY MARKERS LOCATED APPROXIMATELY 300 YARDS UPSTREAM OF THE PUBLIC BOAT LAUNCH AT SPORTSMANS LANDING (INCLUDING THE WATERS AROUND THE UPSTREAM END OF THE ISLAND NEAR THE RUSSIAN RIVER MOUTH) AND THE RUSSIAN RIVER FROM ITS MOUTH UPSTREAM 100 YARDS TO ADF&G REGULATORY MARKERS IS OPEN TO SPORT FISHING, EXCEPT SOCKEYE SALMON MAY BE TAKEN ONLY FROM JULY 15 – AUGUST 20];

(E) **repealed** / **2017** [FROM JUNE 11 – AUGUST 20, THE WATERS OF THE KENAI RIVER NEAR THE CONFLUENCE OF THE RUSSIAN RIVER, FROM THE POWERLINE CROSSING ON THE KENAI RIVER UPSTREAM TO THE FERRY CROSSING, ARE OPEN TO SPORT FISHING FOR SOCKEYE SALMON];

(F) **repealed** / **2017** [FROM JUNE 11 – AUGUST 20, THE WATERS OF THE RUSSIAN RIVER FROM ITS MOUTH UPSTREAM TO AN ADF&G REGULATORY MARKER LOCATED APPROXIMATELY 600 YARDS DOWNSTREAM FORM THE FALLS ARE OPEN SPORT FISHING FOR SOCKEYE SALMON];

(G) from **May 1 – June 10** [JUNE 11 – JULY 31], and from **August 1 – August 31** [SEPTEMBER 1 – MAY 1], the Upper Russian (Goat) Creek upstream from an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 300 yards from its confluence with Upper Russian Lake;

(H) from **May 1 – June 10, the flowing waters of** [JUNE 11 – MAY 1] Jean Lake Creek, **Juneau Creek, the Russian River upstream of a point approximately 100 yards**

**from its confluence with the Kenai River, excluding Upper Russian (Goat) Creek, and Hidden Lake Creek;**

(I) **repealed** / **2017** [FROM JULY 1-SEPTEMBER 30, THE WATERS OF THE RUSSIAN RIVER FROM ITS MOUTH UPSTREAM TO AN ADF&G REGULATORY MARKER LOCATED APPROXIMATELY 600 YARDS DOWNSTREAM FORM THE FALLS ARE OPEN SPORT FISHING FOR COHO SALMON];

5 AAC 57.122(5) is amended to read:

(5) **all tributaries to the Middle Section of the Kenai River, except a section of** the Russian River drainage **downstream** [UPSTREAM] of an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 600 yards downstream from the falls **are** [IS] closed to sport fishing for salmon;

5 AAC 57.122 is amended by adding a new paragraph to read:

**(10) the following waters of the Middle Section of Kenai River drainage are open to sport fishing, only as follows:**

**(A) from July 15 – April 30, the Russian River Sanctuary, including waters upstream from ADF&G regulatory markers located just downstream of the ferry crossing on the Kenai River to ADF&G regulatory markers located approximately 300 yards upstream of the public boat launch at Sportsman's Landing (including the waters around the upstream end of the island near the Russian River mouth) and the Russian River from its mouth upstream 100 yards to ADF&G regulatory markers is open to sport fishing, except sockeye salmon may be taken only from July 15 – August 20;**

**(B) from June 11 – August 20, the waters of the Kenai River near the confluence of the Russian River, from the powerline crossing on the Kenai River upstream to the Ferry Crossing, are open to sport fishing for sockeye salmon;**

**(C) from June 11 – August 20, the waters of the Russian River from its mouth upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 600 yards downstream from the falls are open to sport fishing for sockeye salmon;**

**(D) from July 1 – September 30, the waters of the Russian River from its mouth upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 600 yards downstream from the falls are open to sport fishing for coho salmon.**

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** The Alaska Department of Fish and Game submitted this suite of proposals to provide the board an opportunity to review Kenai River sport fishing regulations and consider changes to simplify and align regulations. Nearly all existing regulations that have dates which trigger general or special provisions to sport fish regulations reference the first, last or middle day of a month. The purpose is to create regulations 1) with consistent dates that encompass biological concerns, and 2) that are easily understood by the public. Regulations have been adopted in the Kenai River Drainage Area over the years for various fisheries based on biological as well as social issues. In many cases dates that start or discontinue regulations for one fishery do not align with regulations for another fishery in the same area. Over time this created regulations that are disjointed, overly complex, and not easily understood by the public. These proposals identify regulations that, taken as a whole, would align dates and waters to simplify regulations without impacting fishery management objectives.

Aligning regulations for consistency will improve public communication, decrease regulatory complexity and increase public understanding of the sport fishing regulations in the Kenai River Drainage Area.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Department of Fish and Game

(HQ-F16-137)

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