

PROPOSAL 132

5 AAC 47.021. Special provisions for seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the salt waters of the Southeast Alaska Area and 5 AAC 33.384. Lynn Canal and Chilkat River King Salmon Fishery Management Plan.

Amend sport king salmon regulations in Districts 11, 12, 14, and 15 based on the Taku River king salmon preseason escapement estimate, as follows:

Sport Fishery

If preseason chinook projection is:

- A. In upper 1/3 of escapement range, Taku Inlet north of Cooper Point closed to king fishing April 15 through June 15. Waters of Lynn Canal above latitude of Eldred Rock closed to king fishing. Maximum limit two (2) king salmon per day.
- B. In middle 1/3 of escapement range, Taku Inlet and waters from Limestone Inlet to a line from Pt Louisa to Symonds Point closed to king fishing April 15 through June 15. Waters of district 15 that are open to sport fishing, maximum limit one (1) king salmon per day.
- C. In lower 1 /3 of escapement range, all waters of district 11 and 15 closed to king salmon fishing. Waters of district 12 and 14 open to sport fishing, maximum limit of one (1) king salmon per day.

Notes: This proposal would affect only waters of Southeast Alaska inside the surf line from April 15 to June 30. It would apply only when preseason projections of run strength fall within or below established escapement range goals. It would not apply if projections came in above established escapement range goals.

Should in-season indicators of abundance (CPUE in fisheries, Juneau sport catch, tag recoveries, fish wheel data) show projected run strength failing to materialize, the Department will take immediate action to reduce harvest opportunity in all fisheries and move more kings into the escapement.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Alaska Department of Fish and Game has excellent data available on king salmon life histories, harvest, spawning, and distribution. Existing management strategy has failed to put adequate annual escapements into the Taku and Chilkat rivers. Both stocks are currently at all-time lows and future projections of returns are at an all-time low. The Chilkat run has been below minimum escapement four of the last five years and the Taku has been below minimum two of the last four years. 2006 was the last year the Taku received an escapement above the escapement range and for the last decade, all harvest has come directly out of the escapements Years of fishing on escapement is to a large degree why these stocks are at all-time lows.

The goal of this proposal is to put adequate, annual escapements of king salmon into the Taku and Chilkat rivers.

PROPOSED BY: Michael R. Bethers

(HQ-F17-054)

PROPOSAL 133

5 AAC 29.090. Management of the spring salmon troll fisheries; 5 AAC 29.095. District 8 King Salmon Management Plan; 5 AAC 29.097. District 11 King Salmon Management Plan; 5 AAC 33.368. District 8 King Salmon Management Plan; 5 AAC 33.384. Lynn Canal and Chilkat River King Salmon Fishery Management Plan; and 5 AAC 33.XXX. New Section (District 11 King Salmon Management Plan).

Base duration of commercial salmon troll and drift gillnet gear spring openings on preseason king salmon abundance projections, as follows:

Commercial Proposal

Troll Fishery

If preseason chinook projection is:

- A. In upper 1/3 of escapement range, spring troll areas in districts 9, 12, and 14 will be open concurrently to a maximum of four (4) days per week.
- B. In middle 1/3 of escapement range, spring troll areas in district 9, 12, and 14 will be open concurrently to a maximum of two (2) days per week.
- C. In lower 1/3 of escapement range, spring troll areas in districts 9, 12, and 14 will be closed April 15-June 30.

Gillnet Fishery

If preseason chinook projection is:

- A. In upper 1/3 of escapement range, there will be no targeted king openings. Normal areas open for sockeye on normal starting date.
- B. In middle 1/3 of escapement range, there will be no targeted king openings. Reduced open areas adjacent to river mouths, mesh restrictions in effect, sockeye openings to occur on normal dates.
- C. In lower 1/3 of escapement range, there will be no targeted king openings. Major areas closed to protect king salmon, mesh restrictions in effect, no king retention, sockeye openings may be delayed, night closures through June 30th.

Notes:

This proposal would affect only waters of Southeast Alaska inside the surf line from April 15 to June 30. It would apply only when preseason projections of run strength fall within or below established escapement range goals. It would not apply if projections came in above established escapement range goals.

Should in-season indicators of abundance (CPUE in fisheries, Juneau sport catch, tag recoveries, fish wheel data) show projected run strength failing to materialize, the Department will take immediate action to reduce harvest opportunity in all fisheries and move more kings into the escapement.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Alaska Department of Fish and Game has excellent data available on king salmon life histories, harvest, spawning, and distribution. Existing management strategy has failed to put adequate annual escapements into the

Taku and Chilkat rivers. Both stocks are currently at all-time lows and future projections of returns are at an all-time low. The Chilkat run has been below minimum escapement four of the last five years and the Taku has been below minimum two of the last four years. 2006 was the last year the Taku received an escapement above the escapement range and for the last decade, all harvest has come directly out of the escapements. Years of fishing on escapement is to a large degree why these stocks are at all-time lows.

The goal of this proposal is to put adequate, annual escapements of king salmon into the Taku and Chilkat rivers.

PROPOSED BY: Michael R. Bethers

(HQ-F17-053)

PROPOSAL 134

5 AAC 29.090. Management of the spring salmon troll fisheries.

Close the spring commercial salmon troll fishery in Districts 9, 12, and 14 when the Juneau area sport fishery is closed to protect king salmon, as follows:

Close the troll fishery in districts 9,12 and 14 from April 15 to June 15 whenever the Juneau sport fishery is closed to protect Taku chinook from April 15 to June 15.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Taku and Chilkat king salmon stocks are at all time lows and predicted escapements for both rivers are way below the minimum escapement goals. Both stocks have exhibited a downward spiral over the last ten years. Although the Territorial Sportsmen concur that poor ocean survival may be the major limiting factor it is imperative that we take every possible conservation measure to assure that every spawning king salmon reaching our coast makes it to the rivers. The Department of Fish and Game has adopted many of the measures this spring that were proposed by our organization two years ago in Sitka. However, those measures are too little and too late. There is a conservation crisis here. The troll fishery is the largest harvester of the spring Taku king salmon run and should participate fully in its conservation. Taku stocks (and Chilkat stocks) are taken in districts 9, 12 and 14.

PROPOSED BY: Territorial Sportsmen, Inc./Ron Somerville

(EF-F17-076)
