

PROPOSAL 147

5 AAC 15.357. Chignik Area Salmon Management Plan.

Reduce the inriver goal for sockeye salmon above the Chignik River weir for August and September, as follows:

Rewrite : 5 AAC 15.357 (b)(3)(B) to read:

(B) the department shall manage the commercial fishery to allow for the passage of at least **20,000** sockeye salmon above the Chignik River weir, in addition to the late-run sockeye salmon escapement needs, to provide an inriver harvestable surplus above the Chignik River weir in August and September of at least **10,000 fish** in August and **10,000 fish** from September 1 through September 30.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The current inriver-goal above the Chignik River weir of 75,000 sockeye salmon for August and September combined, as put in place during the last Board cycle, is too high and effectively prohibits traditional opportunities to commercially fish surplus sockeye and Coho salmon in late August and September. Further, the August inriver goal of 25,000 and the September 50,000 inriver goal each well exceed that necessary to readily meet late season sockeye and/or red-fish subsistence needs. ADF&G reports that total subsistence harvest post- June combined for all waters upstream of the Chignik River weir (Chignik River, Chignik Lake and its tributaries and Black Lake) is less than 3,000 sockeye salmon (ADF&G Subsistence Div. report, 2015). A more balanced inriver subsistence goal would be 10,000 sockeye for each of the two months for a total 20,000 fish, an amount nearly 600 percent more than the estimated total post-June sockeye subsistence harvest of less than 3,000.

Further consideration is that the original request for the current August and September inriver goals of 25,000 and 50,000 sockeye salmon respectively for a total of 75,000 fish was based in part by the belief that the second or late-run escapement needed to be higher than that managed by ADF&G to improve second run production. While the subsistence priority is fully recognized and most valid, it should not be used to go beyond reasonableness to where a higher escapement is mandated well beyond that necessary to fully satisfy local subsistence requirements and opportunities.

An August and September inriver goal of 10,000 for each of the two months for total of 20,000 sockeye salmon is sensible. Such would readily ensure a healthy surplus of fish beyond local subsistence needs and yet still encourage the opportunity for a late-season fishery particularly on local Chignik Coho salmon. Further consideration is that a late-season commercial Coho salmon fishery may well advantage late-run Chignik sockeye salmon production, per FRI (Univ. of WA). Several studies provide evidence that Coho fry predation on juvenile sockeye salmon rearing in Chignik Lake is substantially suppressing late-run sockeye salmon production. Establishing a 10,000 August and a 10,000 September inriver sockeye salmon goal for a total inriver goal of a 20,000 fish would be functional for all concerned and is therefore respectfully requested.

PROPOSED BY: Don Bumpus

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