

**PROPOSAL 216**

**5 AAC XX.XXX. New section.**

Create a Deshka River large king salmon optimum escapement goal, as follows:

Deshka River large fish king salmon spawning OEG escapement goal ~~X-XX~~ [13,000-28,000].

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Please adopt a large fish Deshka River king salmon spawning escapement goal.

Since 2013 Deshka River, Susitna River drainage, and Northern District king salmon fisheries have been managed based partially on the preseason Deshka River king salmon return estimate. The Department's most accurate portion of this estimate is for older age-class fish (large fish). In addition, the female component of a king salmon run consists almost entirely of older age-class "large" fish.

Since it is important for quality king salmon spawning escapements to have adequate numbers of female fish, rather than only high numbers of younger male fish, since the Deshka River return is used for management purposes throughout the entire Susitna River drainage and for management of the Northern District commercial set net fishery, and since Deshka River has the best king salmon data set in Northern Cook Inlet, it therefore makes sense, consistent to large fish king salmon goals used elsewhere in Alaska, that a large fish king salmon goal be developed and adopted for Deshka River. Such a goal would increase projection accuracy, and allow for more precise fishery management coinciding with the goal.

The Committee knows the Department develops a BEG or SEG, but the Board may adopt an OEG. The Board previously designated several Northern Cook Inlet king salmon stocks as Stocks of Concern. We respectfully request the most recent and best available science be used to manage Northern Cook Inlet king salmon stocks. NOTE: With ADF&G suggesting a reduced Deshka River goal of 9,000 - 18,000 (kings of any size) - a better precautionary measure would be to ensure an escapement target containing adequate numbers of large king salmon. The department's ability to gauge king salmon size inseason should be considered.

**PROPOSED BY:** Matanuska Valley Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F19-044)

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