

**PROPOSAL 96**

**5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan.**

Increase the Kenai River sockeye salmon inriver goal, increase the sport limits, and pair closures, as follows:

Raise the Sockeye Escapement goal above the sonar in the Kenai River to 1.1 million to 1.3 million allowing a minimum of 400,000 fish for the sport fishing harvest

Draft reg: Increase daily bag limit to 6 fish per day/12 in possession. If fish are late, sockeye sport fishing will remain open on par with commercial fishing and both will close at the same time.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Increase Kenai River Sockeye Allocation for Sport Fishing. Ref: ADFG Subsistence Report dtd 2014. It states the urban population is 612,475 (83%): sport fishermen harvested only 0.1% or the total fish resource. There are approximately +/- 300,000 resident sport fishermen. This is while commercial fishermen harvested 98.5 of the resource statewide. In 2014, there were 513 set gill net permits and 496 drift gill net permits that fished the Cook Inlet. This does not meet the intent of the Alaska Constitution Article VIII NATURAL RESOURCES that the natural resources are to be managed as a public trust providing for maximum use consistent with the public interests to provide people with common access for resources and based on sustainable yield . The 98.5% versus 0.1% isn't meeting the needs of the public maximum use benefiting all people with common access to the resource. The Kenai River is one of the few places where the public can gain road access to harvest fish.

To drive 300 miles round trip on the hopes of timing it just right to catch 3 sockeye per day is not economical. ADFG tries to manage the fish run to dribble fish into the river allowing maximum commercial harvest while providing minimum fish escapement. Management of the resource needs to satisfy both parties and not leave one user group to pick over the remains of the salt water harvest. There needs to be more fish in the river in greater amounts that will support a consistent sport fish harvest during the fish runs. I enjoy catching and eating salmon, not just fishing for it. My purpose is to harvest enough fish to last my family until next season. Based on the numbers above, sports fishermen are not receiving a fair allocation of the sockeye salmon resource.

I contend that 300,000 sports license holders harvesting 0.1% of the resource versus commercial permit holders harvesting 98.5% does not comply with the intent of our constitution.

Furthermore, when fish were late as in 2018 with 51 % of the run arriving in August after the sockeye sports fishing was closed, the commercial permit holders were allowed to continue fishing. Only later in August was sports fishing reopened for a short period. Both parties should have been given equal opportunity to harvest the resource.

**PROPOSED BY:** Walt Arthur

(HQ-F19-133)

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