

**PROPOSAL 14**

**5 AAC 56.122. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area.**

Modify the Ninilchik River hatchery king salmon limits and season as follows:

5 AAC 56.122(a)(6) is amended to read:

...

(D)(i) on Memorial Day weekend and the following two weekends and the Monday following each of those weekends; bag and possession limit of [ONE] **two** king salmon, 20 inches or greater in length, **of which only one fish may be a naturally-produced king salmon**; a person who takes and retains [A] **two** king salmon 20 inches or greater in length from the Ninilchik River, Deep Creek, or the Anchor River may not sport fish in any of those drainages for the rest of that day;

(ii) from June 16 – **July 15** [OCTOBER 31]; bag and possession limit of [ONE] **two** hatchery king salmon, 20 inches or greater in length; naturally-produced king salmon may not be retained; a person who takes and retains [ONE] **two** king salmon 20 inches or greater in length from the Ninilchik River drainage may not sport fish in the Ninilchik River drainage for the rest of the day;

(G) the Ninilchik River from the outlet of the Ninilchik small boat harbor to ADF&G regulatory markers just upstream of the Sterling Highway Bridge is open to sport fishing to a person under 16 years of age during the designated youth fishery which occurs on the second Wednesday after Memorial Day between the hours of 6:00 am and 9:59 pm; king salmon bag and possession limit is [ONE] **two** king salmon of any size, **of which only one fish may be a naturally produced king salmon**; annual limit and other restrictions specified in (a)(6)(D)(iii) of this section apply; a harvest record is required as specified in 5 AAC 75.006; a person who takes and retains [A] **two** king salmon may not sport fish in the Ninilchik River for the rest of the day;

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?**

Over the last six years, the Ninilchik River king salmon supplementation program has made several improvements that have resulted in an increased hatchery return to the Ninilchik River. Since 2019, the department has issued preseason and inseason emergency orders to provide additional harvest opportunity for hatchery fish. Hatchery fish not harvested in the sport fishery and in excess of broodstock collection needs have been culled during eggtakes in an effort to minimize the hatchery contribution to the Ninilchik River escapement. In the last three years, there has been more than 1,000 extra hatchery fish after broodstock collection. Increasing the bag limit will provide consistent additional sport fishing opportunity, while minimizing the hatchery contribution to the escapement.

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

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