

PROPOSAL 120 – 5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan.

Decrease the inriver goal ranges for late-run Kenai River sockeye salmon by 100,000 fish and limit the bag and possession of sockeye salmon to three per day and three in possession in the Kenai River sport fishery, as follows:

- (c) (1) at run strengths of less than 2,300,000 sockeye salmon,
 - (A) the department shall manage for an inriver goal range of 800,000 - 1,000,000 sockeye salmon past the sonar counter at river mile 19; and
- (2) at run strengths of 2,300,000- 4,600,000 sockeye salmon,
 - (A) the department shall manage for an inriver goal range of 900,000 – 1,000,000 sockeye
- (3) at run strengths greater than 4,600,000 sockeye salmon,
 - (A) the department shall manage for an inriver goal range of 1,000,000 - 1,200,000 sockeye salmon past the sonar counter at river mile 19;

- (h)
 - (1) fishing will occur seven days per week, 24 hours per day;
 - (2) the bag and possession limit for sockeye salmon is three per day, with three [SIX] in possession, in the sport fishery, [UNLESS THE DEPARTMENT DETERMINES THAT THE ABUNDANCE OF LATE-RUN SOCKEYE SALMON EXCEEDS 2,300,000 FISH, AT WHICH TIME THE COMMISSIONER MAY, BY EMERGENCY ORDER, INCREASE THE BAG AND POSSESSION LIMIT AS THE COMMISSIONER DETERMINES TO BE APPROPRIATE; AND]

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? In 2000 and 2001 the department conducted a habitat study on the Kenai River to determine habitat damage from the recreational fishery. That report was withheld from the public and the Board. Instead of punishing whomever was responsible for this egregious act, the ADF&G Commissioner stated "the department used the results", 5 AAC 21.363 (d) is quite clear;

(d) The sonar count levels established in this section may be lowered by the board if noncommercial fishing, after consideration of mitigation efforts, results in a net loss of riparian habitat on the Kenai River. The department will, to the extent practicable, conduct habitat assessments on a schedule that conforms to the Board of Fisheries (board) triennial meeting cycle. If the assessments demonstrate a net loss of riparian habitat caused by noncommercial fishermen, the department is requested to report those findings to the board and submit proposals to the board for appropriate modification of the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon inriver goal

This provision was put in the plan in 1999, in the ensuing 16 years the department has not reported anything to the Board or submitted any habitat proposals. I think it would be appropriate to lower each inriver range by 100,000 fish and limit the daily bag limit to three and three in possession.

PROPOSED BY: Suzanne Ducker (HQ-F16-113)
