

PROPOSAL 108

5 AAC 47.055 Southeast Alaska King Salmon Management Plan

Modify management and allocation provisions of the Southeast Alaska King Salmon Management Plan, as follows:

Reinstate the provisions of 5 AAC 47.055 King Salmon Management Plan that sunset March 31, 2025, with the following changes to maintain stability in the troll fishery and allow the sport fishery to achieve an average harvest of 20 percent:

(b) The objectives of the management plan under this section are to

(1) manage the sport fishery to attain an average harvest of 20 percent of the annual harvest ceiling specified by the Pacific Salmon Commission, after the subtraction of the commercial net allocation specified in 5 AAC 29.060 from the harvest ceiling;

(2) allow uninterrupted sport fishing in salt waters for king salmon, while not exceeding the harvest ceiling;

(3) minimize regulatory restrictions on resident anglers; [and]

(4) **allow for inseason transfer from the troll fishery to the sport fishery, not to exceed 5 percent of the troll/sport allocation for the year;**

(5) [(4)] allow for the transfer of any projected unused balance in sport allocation to the troll fishery at a date determined by the department.

(n) **The department shall implement the following reductions for nonresident anglers in waters not subject to wild stock closures in that year if the nine-year rolling average of the sport fishery harvest exceeds 22 percent on consecutive years; reductions will lift when the nine-year rolling average reduces to 20 percent or below;** [The provisions of this section do not apply after March 31, 2025.]

(1) **A nonresident bag limit of one king salmon;**

(2) **for tiers (c)(d)(e)(f)(g) and (h), from January 1 through June 30, a nonresident annual harvest limit of three king salmon, 28 inches or greater in length;**

(3) **for tiers (c)(d)(e) and (f), from July 1 through July 15, a nonresident annual harvest limit of two king salmon, 28 inches or greater in length; any king salmon harvested by a nonresident from January 1 through June 30 will apply towards the two fish annual harvest limit; from July 16 through December 31, retention of king salmon for nonresidents is prohibited;**

(4) **for tier (g), from July 1 through July 7, a nonresident annual harvest limit of two king salmon, 28 inches or greater in length; any king salmon harvested by a nonresident from January 1 through June 30 will apply towards the two fish annual harvest limit; from July 8 through December 31, retention of king salmon for nonresidents is prohibited;**

(5) **for tier (h), from July 1 through July 7, a nonresident annual harvest limit of one king salmon, 28 inches or greater in length; any king salmon harvested by a nonresident from January 1 through June 30 will apply towards the two fish annual harvest limit; from July 8 through December 31, retention of king salmon for nonresidents is prohibited;**

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Changes in the 2019-2028 Pacific Salmon Treaty annex altered the landscape for the Southeast sport fishery by adding a payback provision that effectively prohibits longstanding historical management of the sport

fishery to an average harvest. Managing on average made up for a lack of allocation in low abundance, and for the inability of the sport fishery to harvest its full allocation in high abundance. A fixed 20% allocation geared to in season management does not fit the dynamic of the fishery.

In the 2022 Southeast finfish meeting, the Board adopted a sport fishery management structure that addressed the problem by modifying limits for anglers that rearranged harvest opportunity across abundance levels to stabilize the fishery and target the historical 20% average harvest. The arrangement incorporates give and take from the troll fishery, conceptually similar to earlier management.

The idea behind the 2022 agreement adopted by the Board was sound, but there were unforeseen consequences (i.e., a severely truncated August king troll opening in 2023). This proposal adds necessary protections for the troll fishery to address seasonal stability and ensure an average troll harvest equivalent to 80% of the annual harvest ceiling specified by the Pacific Salmon Commission, after the subtraction of the commercial net allocation specified in 5 AAC 29.060 from the harvest ceiling.

If this proposal is not adopted, the sport fishery will face frequent in season management if held to a yearly 20% allocation target. This severely compromises harvest opportunity for anglers in low abundance, destabilizing the fishery. It also sets up the sport fishery to never achieve its allocation given it lacks power to harvest 20% in high abundance. In low abundance, cautious management to avoid overages will also add to the fishery falling short of allocation.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain.

PROPOSED BY: Southeast Alaska Guides Organization

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