

PROPOSAL 152

5 AAC 30.365. Situk-Ahrnklin Inlet and Lost River King Salmon Fisheries Management Plan.

Amend the *Situk-Ahrnklin Inlet and Lost River King Salmon Fisheries Management Plan* to reflect recent management strategies, as follows:

5 AAC 30.365 is amended to read:

(a) The purpose of the management plan in this section is to provide for the biological escapement goal requirements of spawning king salmon to the Situk-Ahrnklin River systems. This management plan provides guidelines to the department in an effort to preclude allocation conflicts between the various user groups of the king salmon resource. Action points and associated ranges within the plan are intended to be based on the current king salmon escapement goal ranges for the Situk River system.

(b) The biological escapement goal for the Situk River king salmon is 730 three ocean age and older fish, with a range of 450 - 1,050 fish.

(c) The department shall manage the commercial, sport, and subsistence fisheries as follows:

(1) **until at least 450 three ocean age or older king salmon have passed the Situk River weir located approximately 2 miles upstream of the mouth** [IF THE PROJECTED ESCAPEMENT IS LESS THAN 350 THREE OCEAN AGE AND OLDER FISH, THE COMMISSIONER SHALL CLOSE, BY EMERGENCY ORDER,] the king salmon **fisheries are to be managed as follows:**

(A) **the sport fishery for king salmon** in the Situk River **shall be closed;**

(B) **retention of king salmon in the** subsistence, personal use, and commercial set gillnet fisheries in the Situk-Ahrnklin Inlet and Lost River **shall be prohibited;** and

(C) **the** commercial troll fishery **shall be closed** in the waters of Alaska bounded on the west by the [SEAWARD LIMIT OF THE] three-nautical-mile **limit of the** territorial sea and on the north by a line extending seaward from 59° 30.49' N. lat., 139° 46.58' W. long. [(OCEAN CAPE)] and intersecting the three-nautical-mile limit at **59° 28.44' N. lat., 139° 51.68' W. long.** [59° 28.65' N. lat., 139° 51.17' W. long.] and on the south by a line extending seaward from **59° 21.07' N. lat., 139° 19.73' W. long.,** [59° 20.30' N. LAT., 139° 16.50' W. LONG.] and intersecting the three-nautical-mile limit at **59° 19.08' N. lat., 139° 24.98' W. long.** [59° 18.25' N. lat., 139° 21.94' W. LONG.];

(D) **weekly fishing periods in the Situk-Ahrnklin Inlet and Lost River set gillnet fisheries may be restricted;**

(2) **when at least 450 three ocean age or older king salmon have passed the Situk River weir located approximately 2 miles upstream of the mouth** [IF THE PROJECTED ESCAPEMENT IS 350 - 450 THREE OCEAN AGE OR OLDER FISH THE COMMISSIONER] **the king salmon fisheries are to be managed as follows:**

(A) **the subsistence fishery will have priority over sport and commercial fisheries and may open for retention of king salmon prior to the sport and commercial fisheries;**[SHALL, BY EMERGENCY ORDER, CLOSE THE SPORT FISHERY FOR KING SALMON IN THE SITUK RIVER; AND]

(B) **retention of king salmon in the commercial set gillnet fisheries in the Situk-Ahrnklin Inlet and Lost River may be allowed;** [MAY, BY EMERGENCY ORDER, IMPLEMENT ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING MANAGEMENT MEASURES FOR CONSERVATION PURPOSES:]

(i) **repealed / /** [ESTABLISH A NONRETENTION KING SALMON SEASON IN THE SITUK-AHRNKLIN INLET AND LOST RIVER SET GILLNET FISHERIES;]

(C)[(II) CLOSE] the commercial salmon troll fishery **may open** in the waters of Alaska bounded on the west by the [SEAWARD LIMIT OF THE] three-nautical-mile **limit of the** territorial sea and on the north by a line extending seaward from 59° 30.49' N. lat., 139° 46.58' W. long. [(OCEAN CAPE)] and intersecting the three-nautical-mile limit at **59° 28.44' N. lat., 139° 51.68' W. long.** [59° 28.65' N. lat., 139° 51.17' W. long.] and on the south by a line extending seaward from **59° 21.07' N. lat., 139° 19.73' W. long.** [59° 20.30' N. LAT., 139° 16.50' W. LONG.] and intersecting the three-nautical-mile limit at **59° 19.08' N. lat., 139° 24.98' W. long.** [59° 18.25' N. LAT., 139° 21.94' W. LONG.; **and**

(iii) **repealed / /** RESTRICT THE WEEKLY FISHING PERIODS IN THE SITUK-AHRNKLIN INLET AND LOST RIVER SET GILLNET FISHERIES]; **and**

(D) the sport fishery for king salmon in the Situk River may open downstream of the weir located at approximately river mile 2;

(3) **when at least 730 three ocean or older king salmon have passed the Situk River weir located approximately 2 miles upstream of the mouth the king salmon fisheries are to be managed as follows:** [IF THE PROJECTED ESCAPEMENT IS 451 - 730 THREE OCEAN AGE OR OLDER FISH], the commissioner shall, [BY EMERGENCY ORDER, IMPLEMENT ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING MANAGEMENT MEASURES FOR CONSERVATION PURPOSES]:

(A) **allow retention of king salmon in the subsistence fishery;** [ESTABLISH A NONRETENTION KING SALMON SEASON IN THE SITUK-AHRNKLIN INLET AND LOST RIVER SET GILLNET FISHERIES:]

(B) the commercial salmon troll fishery **will open** in the waters of Alaska bounded on the west by the [SEAWARD LIMIT OF THE] three-nautical-mile **limit of the** territorial sea and on the north by a line extending seaward from 59° 30.49' N. lat., 139° 46.58' W. long. [(OCEAN CAPE)] and intersecting the three-nautical-mile limit at **59° 28.44' N. lat., 139° 51.68' W. long.** [59° 28.65' N. lat., 139° 51.17' W. long.] and on the south by a line extending seaward from **59° 21.07' N. lat., 139° 19.73' W. long.** [59° 20.30' N. LAT., 139° 16.50' W. LONG.] and intersecting the three-nautical-mile limit at **59° 19.08' N. lat., 139° 24.98' W. long.** [59° 18.25' N. LAT., 139° 21.94' W. LONG.;

(C) **manage the commercial set gillnet fisheries in the Situk-Ahrnklin Inlet and Lost River based solely on the sockeye salmon run strength, while allowing for the retention of king salmon; and** [RESTRICT THE WEEKLY FISHING PERIODS IN THE SITUK-AHRNKLIN INLET AND LOST RIVER SET GILLNET FISHERIES; AND]

(D) **open the sport fishery for king salmon in the Situk River in the section of river located downstream of the weir located at approximately river mile 2;** RESTRICT THE SPORT HARVEST OF KING SALMON IN THE SITUK RIVER BY IMPLEMENTING ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING MANAGEMENT MEASURES:

(I) CLOSE PORTIONS OF THE SITUK RIVER TO SPORT FISHING FOR KING SALMON;

(II) ESTABLISH A CATCH AND RELEASE SPORT FISHERY ONLY FOR KING SALMON 28 INCHES OR GREATER IN LENGTH];

(4) **repealed / /** [IF THE PROJECTED ESCAPEMENT IS GREATER THAN 730 THREE OCEAN AGE AND OLDER FISH BUT LESS THAN 1,050 FISH, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL,

(A) MANAGE THE COMMERCIAL SET GILLNET FISHERIES IN THE SITUK-AHRNKLIN INLET AND LOST RIVER BASED ON THE SOCKEYE SALMON RUN STRENGTH;

(B) MANAGE THE COMMERCIAL SALMON TROLL FISHERY AS SPECIFIED IN 5 AAC 29.100 IN THE WATERS OF ALASKA BOUNDED ON THE WEST BY THE SEAWARD LIMIT OF THE THREE-NAUTICAL-MILE TERRITORIAL SEA AND ON THE NORTH BY A LINE EXTENDING SEAWARD FROM 59° 30.49' N. LAT., 139° 46.58' W. LONG. (OCEAN CAPE) AND INTERSECTING THE THREE-NAUTICAL-MILE LIMIT AT 59° 28.65' N. LAT., 139° 51.17' W. LONG. AND ON THE SOUTH BY A LINE EXTENDING SEAWARD FROM 59° 20.30' N. LAT., 139° 16.50' W. LONG. AND INTERSECTING THE THREE-NAUTICAL-MILE LIMIT AT 59° 18.25' N. LAT., 139° 21.94' W. LONG.];

(5) [IF THE PROJECTED ESCAPEMENT IS GREATER THAN 1,050 THREE OCEAN AGE AND OLDER FISH] **when 1,050 three ocean or older king salmon have passed the Situk River weir located approximately 2 miles upstream of the mouth,** the department shall manage the commercial, sport, and subsistence fisheries as necessary to harvest large king salmon in excess of the biological escapement goal range; to achieve this goal the commissioner may, by emergency order, implement one or more of the following management measures:

(A) liberalize seasons, areas, and method and means in the Situk River under 5 AAC 75.003(2)(A);

(B) increase the **sport fish** bag, [AND] possession, **and/or annual** limits for king salmon **20** [28] inches or greater in length [TO THREE FISH PER DAY AND SIX IN POSSESSION WITH NO ANNUAL LIMIT];

(C) repealed 7/13/2012;

(D) manage the commercial set gillnet fisheries in the Situk-Ahrnklin Inlet and Lost River based on the sockeye salmon run strength;

(E) in the Situk-Ahrnklin Inlet and Lost River set gillnet fisheries, allow the use of one additional gillnet that is no more than 20 fathoms in length and no more than 45 meshes in depth, with a mesh size of no less than seven and one-half inches, for the directed taking of king salmon during periods when sockeye salmon may or may not be retained.

5 AAC 47.023 (b)(6)(A) is amended to read:

(A) **sport fishing for king salmon is closed unless specified by 5 AAC 30.365** [A KING SALMON 28 inches or GREATER IN LENGTH TAKEN BY A NONRESIDENT WILL NOT COUNT TOWARD THAT NONRESIDENT'S ANNUAL HARVEST LIMIT ESTABLISHED UNDER 5 AAC 47.055];

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? This would revise the *Situk-Ahrnklin Inlet and Lost River King Salmon Fisheries Management Plan* by establishing management actions based on the number of king salmon that pass the Situk River weir rather than the projected escapement. In recent years, the department has been more conservative in the early season than the management plan calls for, given the period of low productivity observed for king salmon across Southeast Alaska. This has included being more conservative in the management of the subsistence and commercial gillnet fisheries and using emergency order authority to proactively close the sport fishery for king salmon to ensure the biological escapement goal is met. This would more closely align the management plan with the management actions the department

has implemented in recent years. The Situk River king salmon run is relatively small in numbers and fish often pass the weir in pulses. This can create a highly variable projected escapement as the basis of management actions. Basing management actions on the number of king salmon that pass the weir is a more reliable management approach that will better align harvest opportunity with abundance of king salmon returning to the Situk.

This would also update the southern boundary of the Situk River troll fishery closure area to provide consistency with 2018 BOF action taken on 5 AAC 29.100, which addressed a change in the location of the terminus of the river mouth. Due to an oversight, similar changes to 5 AAC 30.365 were not addressed at that time. The proposed change to 5 AAC 30.365 is consistent with annual changes made by the department under emergency order authority and also includes updates for the location of coordinates along the three-nautical-mile limit line.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

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