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February 4, 2014

Alaska Board of Fisheries
Board Support Section
P.O. Box 115526
Juneau, Alaska 99811-5526

RE: Cook Inlet Regulatory Meeting 01.31- 02.13/14

Comments on RC 139

Chairman Karl Johnstone,

The Kenai Peninsula Fishermen's Association (KPFA) has reviewed the contents of RC 139 and has offered some revisions.

However, we find that several provisions within this document were not agreeable;

- 1) We oppose an increase of 7,500 fish over the lower end escapement goal; a 50% increase is unwarranted.
- 2) It is our intent to separate management actions and define directives for both Sports division and for the Commercial Fisheries division managers.
- 3) We find the hourly restrictions attached to provision (3) to be severally limiting.
- 4) We reject section (4) as conflicting with current sockeye and pink salmon management plans.

We highly agree with the deletions (repealed) in section (c).

It is our intent to secure reasonable and equitable opportunity for the ESSN fishery. Our mission statement, *Ensuring the Sustainability of Our Fishery Resources*, compels us to assist the Department of Fish and Game and the Board of Fisheries with achieving this goal.

Thank you,

Robert V. Williams President

5 AAC 21.359 Kenai River Late-Run Management Plan (a) The purposes of this management plan are to ensure an adequate escapement of late-run king salmon into the Kenai River system and to provide management guidelines to the department. The department shall manage the late-run Kenai River king salmon stocks primarily for sport and guided sport uses in order to provide the sport and guided sport fishermen with a reasonable opportunity to harvest these salmon resources over the entire run, as measured by the frequency of inriver restrictions.

(b) The department shall manage the late run of Kenai River king salmon to achieve a sustainable escapement goal of 15,000 – 30, 000 king salmon, as follows:

- (1) in the sport fishery,
 - (A) if the sustainable escapement goal is projected to be exceeded, the commissioner may, by emergency order, extend the sport fishing season up to seven days during the first week of August;
 - (B) from July 1 through July 31, a person may not use more than One single hook in the Kenai River downstream from Skilak Lake;
- (2) in the sport fishery, that portion of the Kenai River downstream from Skilak Lake is open to unguided sport fishing from a non-motorized vessel on Mondays in July; for purposes of this section a non-motorized vessel is one that does not have a motor on board;
- (3) **on or after July 23, if the projected inriver return of late-run king salmon is less than 16,500 fish, in order to achieve the sustainable escapement goal and a reasonable harvest opportunity, the commissioner may, by emergency order,**
 - (A) **establish periods in the sport fishery during which the use of bait or retention of king salmon is prohibited,**
 - (B) **prohibit the retention of king salmon in the personal use fishery;**
- (4) **in the commercial set gillnet fishery in the Upper Subdistrict,**
 - (A) **the commissioner may by emergency order open fishing periods based on the abundance of sockeye salmon returning to the Kenai and Kasilof rivers, for no less than 24 hours or more than 36 hours per week,**
 - (B) **restrict the setnet fishery to within one half nautical miles from the Kenai Peninsula shoreline,**
 - (C) **restrict the retention of kings to 28 inches or less**
- (5) if the projected **late run king salmon escapement** [INRIVER RETURN] is less than 15,000 king salmon, the department shall,

- (A) close the sport fisheries in the Kenai River and in salt waters of Cook Inlet north of the latitude of Bluff Point to the taking of king salmon;
- (B) close the commercial drift gillnet fishery in the Central District within one and one-half miles of the Kenai Peninsula shoreline south of the Kenai River; and
- (C) close the commercial set gillnet fishery in the Upper Subdistrict of the Central District.

(c) **Repealed / 2014** [FROM JULY 20 THROUGH JULY 31]

(1) REPEALED 6/22/2002;


(2) IF THE PROJECTED INRIVER RETURN OF LATE-RUN KING SALMON IS LESS THAN 40,000 FISH AND THE INRIVER SPORT FISHERY HARVEST IS PROJECTED TO RESULT IN AN ESCAPEMENT BELOW 15,000 KING SALMON, THE DEPARTMENT MAY RESTRICT THE INRIVER SPORTFISHERY;

(3) REPEALED 6/22/2002;

(4) IF THE INRIVER SPORT FISHERY IS CLOSED UNDER (2) OF THIS SUBSECTION, THE COMMERCIAL SET GILLNET FISHERY IN THE UPPER SUBDISTRICT SHALL BE CLOSED;

(5) REPEALED 6/11/2005;

(d) Repealed 6/22/2002



(e) Consistent with the purposes of this management plan and 5 AAC 21.360, if the projected inriver return of king salmon is less than 40,000 fish, the department may not reduce the closed waters at the mouth of the Kenai River described in 5 AAC 21.350(b).

(f) The provisions of the Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan (5 AAC 21.365) are exempt from the provisions of this section.

(g) 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 this plan.

(h) The commissioner may depart from the provisions of the management plan under this section as provided in 5 AAC 21.363(e). (Eff. 6/10/89, Register 110; em am 4/30/91 – 5/30/91, Register 118 [not printed]; am 7/21/91, Register 119; am 5/31/96, Register 138; am 5/14/97, Register 142; am 2/25/98, Register 145; am 6/13/99, Register 150; am 6/22/2002, Register 162; am 6/30/2002, Register 162; am 6/11/2005, Register 174; am 6/4/2008, Register 186; am 6/1/2013, Register 206)