

Fact Sheet

Title: Motor Regulations Kenai River Special Management Area

The regulation, 11AAC 20.860, prohibits the use of an outboard motor or a combination of outboard motors with a total propshaft horsepower rating greater than 50 horsepower. This regulation also prohibits the use of an outboard motor unless the motor is a four-stroke or a direct fuel injection (DFI) two-stroke engines within the entire Kenai River Special Management Area. A list of currently allowed DFI motors is noted below.

The Kenai River Special Management Area (KRSMA) starts at river mile 4.2, which is approximately one mile downstream from the Warren Ames Bridge, and continues upstream to include both Skilak Lake and Kenai Lake.

The 50 horsepower restriction does not apply to the operation of boats on Kenai Lake, on Skilak Lake, and on the Kenai River between the Kenai Lake Bridge in Copper Landing and river mile 80.7 (near the Princess Lodge).

A 50 horsepower outboard is a standard manufactured motor; therefore, State Parks is not permitting the detuning of any outboard greater than 50 horsepower.

The horsepower rating of an outboard that is equipped with a lower unit and prop is taken at the propshaft, which is the shaft that the propeller is installed upon.

If there is a jet drive unit on the outboard motor, as per regulation, the jet drive unit does not change the equivalent propshaft horsepower rating of the motor powerhead and driveshaft configuration. The horsepower rating of the motor equipped with a jet is taken either at the powerhead or the driveshaft prior to the jet drive unit. This prohibits the use of a jet drive unit to detune an outboard motor to or below the horsepower limit.

There are a number of manufactures that sell a "Jet Drive" outboard motor. These manufactures use the outboard industry standard of an approximate 30% loss of power at the final output due to the jet drive unit and label the outboard accordingly. A common outboard motor and jet drive unit combination is the use of a 60 horsepower powerhead and because of loss of power due to the jet drive unit, the manufacture will label the motor as 40 horsepower. This particular motor combination is illegal to operate in the horsepower restricted areas of the KRSMA.

The outboard horsepower rating must be clearly labeled by the manufacturer with cowling decals.

All outboard motors operated in the Kenai River Special Management Area are required to be a four-stroke or a Direct Fuel Injection (DFI) two-stroke engine

A four-stroke engine requires only pure unleaded fuel and the engine oil is added only for lubrication into a crankcase. This is similar to an automobile engine. A four-stroke motor will have dipstick and in many cases an oil filter. All four-stroke motors are legal in the KRSMA.

Two-stroke engines rely upon either premixed fuel, which combines two-cycle oil with gasoline in a fuel tank, or oil injection, where there is a two-cycle oil reservoir that allows the oil to be injected into the carburetors or fuel injectors before burning. Not all two-stroke motors are legal in the KRSMA.

Only Direct Fuel Injection two-stroke motors are legal to operate in the KRSMA. Presently, only Nissan or Tohatsu, (Models 40 TLDI or 50 TLDI) and Bombardier Motor Corporation –Evinrude, (Models E-TEC 40 or E-TEC 50) make a Direct Fuel Injected (DFI) Engine that are legal and also meet the 50 horsepower restrictions.

Not all Electronic Fuel Injected (EFI) two stroke engines qualify as Direct Fuel Injection (DFI) engines. Although Direct Fuel Injected (DFI) engines are also Electronic Fuel Injected (EFI) engines, not all EFI's are DFI's. The two stroke engine must be one of the newer Direct Fuel Injected (DFI) engines noted.

Where can I get further information?

You can contact:

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