

SPORT FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-1-18-12

Issued at Soldotna: Tuesday, June 19, 2012

Effective Date: 12:01 a.m., Sunday, July 1, 2012

Expiration Date: 11:59 p.m., Tuesday, July 31, 2012, unless superseded by subsequent emergency order.

EXPLANATION:

This emergency order prohibits the use of bait while sport fishing in the Kenai River from its mouth upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located at the outlet of Skilak Lake and in the Moose River from its confluence with the Kenai River upstream to the northernmost edge of the Sterling Highway Bridge beginning at 12:01 a.m., Sunday, July 1, through 11:59 p.m., Tuesday, July 31, 2012.

REGULATION:

The provisions of 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area. (1)(B) are superseded by this emergency order. Under this emergency order, the following provisions are effective beginning at 12:01 a.m., Sunday, July 1, 2012 through 11:59 p.m., through Tuesday, July 31, 2012.

5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area.

(1) sport fishing gear restrictions:

(B) from July 1 – July 31, in the Kenai River from its mouth upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located at the outlet of Skilak Lake and in the Moose River from its confluence with the Kenai River upstream to the northernmost edge of the Sterling Highway bridge, only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used.

Cora Campbell,
Commissioner

By delegation to:

Robert N. Begich
Area Management Biologist

JUSTIFICATION:

The purpose of both 5 AAC 57.160. Kenai River and Kasilof River Early-run King Salmon Management Plan. (a), and 5 AAC 21.359. Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan. (a) are to ensure adequate escapement of early-and late-run king salmon into the Kenai River.

As of June 19, approximately 62 percent of the early-run of Kenai River king salmon is complete and all indices used to assess inriver abundance indicate a run that is well below average. Inseason projections show

all indices will not achieve their respective minimum inseason management objective by the end of the run on June 30. Through June 17 the DIDSON sonar cumulative estimate of king salmon passage into the Kenai River was 2,201 fish. Inseason projections using DIDSON sonar are for a total run to the river of 4,000 to 4,100 early-run Kenai River king salmon. All of this information used in combination indicates the 2012 early-run is the lowest on record.

King salmon runs to Cook Inlet, including early-run Kenai River king salmon, and throughout Alaska, are experiencing a period of low productivity and low run strength. The department has no information indicating that the Kenai River late-run will experience average or above average run strength. The prohibition on the use of bait during July will reduce the harvest rate of both early- and late-run stocks. In addition to conserving these stocks, this action may delay or avoid further restrictions to the inriver sport fishery as well as other fisheries harvesting late-run Kenai River king salmon. Therefore, these measures are warranted to ensure adequate escapement of Kenai River early- and late-run king salmon.

PREVIOUS EMERGENCY ORDERS AFFECTED:

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-1-11-12, which restricted the Kenai River Drainage king salmon fishery to catch-and-release trophy fishing was superseded by Emergency Order No. 2-KS-1-17-12.

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-1-17-12, which closed a portion of the Kenai River Drainage to sport fishing for king salmon fishery, remains in effect.

DISTRIBUTION:

The distribution list for this emergency order is on file at the Region 2 Office of Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish, 333 Raspberry Road, Anchorage, AK 99518, (907) 267-2218.