

# SPORT FISHING

## *Emergency Order*

ALASKA DEPARTMENT  
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-2-14-12

Issued at: Palmer, Wednesday, June 13, 2012

Effective Date: 6:00 a.m., Friday, June 15, 2012

Expiration Date: 11:59 p.m., Friday, July 13, 2012, unless superseded by subsequent emergency order.

### **EXPLANATION:**

This emergency order supersedes Emergency Order No. 2-KS-2-07-12, issued in Palmer on Tuesday, May 1, 2012. This emergency order closes the Little Susitna River in the Knik Arm Drainage Area to fishing for king salmon effective at 6:00 a.m., Friday, June 15, 2012, through 11:59 p.m., Friday, July 13, 2012. The closure prohibits sport fishing for king salmon, including catch-and-release fishing. King salmon may not be retained or possessed; king salmon accidentally caught while fishing for other species may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately. The area affected by this emergency order includes all waters of the Little Susitna River from its confluence with Cook Inlet upstream to the Parks Highway bridge.

### **REGULATION:**

The provisions of 5 AAC 60.122. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Knik Arm Drainage Area. (9)(A) are superseded by this emergency order. Under this emergency order, the following provisions are effective, beginning 6:00 a.m., Friday, June 15, 2012, through 11:59 p.m., Friday, July 13, 2012:

#### **5 AAC 60.122. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Knik Arm Drainage Area.**

(9) in the Little Susitna River drainage,

(A) Beginning 6:00 a.m., Friday, June 15, 2012, in flowing waters from its mouth upstream to the Parks Highway, sport fishing is closed for king salmon; king salmon may not be retained or possessed; king salmon caught may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately;

Cora Campbell,  
Commissioner

By delegation to:

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Sam Ivey,  
Area Management Biologist

**JUSTIFICATION:**

Little Susitna River king salmon runs have failed to achieve the sustainable escapement goal of 900–1,800 fish the last two years despite inseason closures to the sport fishery. An exit survey conducted in 2012 by the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation at the Little Susitna Public Use Facility (LSPUF) indicates the 2012 king salmon run is weaker than in 2011, and is substantiated by low harvest rates during days when harvest was allowed. A previous emergency order issued on May 1 that restricted harvest to Friday—Mondays (4-day weekends) with an annual limit of 2 king salmon over 20 inches, and allowed only the use of one, unbaited, single hook lure was an attempt to reduce harvest by 50 percent over the course of the season to achieve the escapement goal based on 2010-2011 harvest and escapement levels.

If the sport harvest is not further restricted and the run is indeed weaker than experienced in 2011, it is likely the escapement goal will not be achieved in 2012. It is anticipated that closing the fishery after June 15 in combination with effects of the restrictions implemented at the beginning of the season, will reduce harvest by as much as 75 percent, providing the greatest potential for achieving the escapement goal in 2012. Therefore, it is warranted to close the Little Susitna River to king salmon fishing for the remainder of the season.

**PREVIOUS EMERGENCY ORDERS AFFECTED:**

Emergency order No. 2-KS-2-07-12, which reduced the annual limit to 2 king salmon over 20 inches in length, restricted harvest to Fridays-Mondays, and allowed the use of one, unbaited, single hook, artificial lure only is superseded.

**DISTRIBUTION:**

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