

SPORT FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-1-45-13

Issued at Soldotna: Friday, July 26, 2013

Effective Date: 12:01 a.m., Sunday, July 28, 2013

Expiration Date: 11:59 p.m., Wednesday, July 31, 2013, unless superseded by subsequent emergency order.

EXPLANATION:

This emergency order supersedes Emergency Order No. 2-KS-1-43-13, issued Tuesday, July 23, 2013. This emergency order closes the Kenai River drainage to fishing for king salmon from its mouth upstream to 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 12:01 a.m., Sunday, July 28, through 11:59 p.m., Wednesday, July 31. This closure prohibits all sport fishing for king salmon, including catch-and-release fishing. King salmon may not be retained or possessed; king salmon caught while fishing for other species may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately.

REGULATION:

The provisions of 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area. (2)(A)(i) and (3)(A) are superseded by this emergency order. Under this emergency order, the following provisions are effective beginning at 12:01 a.m., Sunday, July 28, 2013 through 11:59 p.m., Wednesday, July 31, 2013.

5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area.

(2) king salmon 20 inches or greater in length, as follows:

(A)(i) from July 15 – July 31 in the Kenai River from its mouth upstream to 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, is closed to sport fishing for king salmon; king salmon may not be possessed or retained and may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately;

(3) king salmon less than 20 inches in length as follows:

(A) in unstocked lakes and ponds and in the Kenai River from its mouth upstream to 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, sport fishing for king salmon is closed from July 15 – July 31; king salmon may not be possessed or retained and may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately;

Cora Campbell,
Commissioner

By delegation to:

Robert N. Begich
Area Management Biologist

JUSTIFICATION:

A primary purpose of 5 AAC 21.359. Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan is to ensure adequate escapement of late-run king salmon into the Kenai River.

The sustainable escapement goal (SEG) for Kenai River late-run king salmon is 15,000 to 30,000 king salmon. As of July 25, the DIDSON sonar cumulative estimate of king salmon passage into the Kenai River was 9,365 fish. The projected sport harvest and catch and release mortality of king salmon in the Kenai River upstream of the sonar through the end of the season as estimated by an in-season creel survey is approximately 1,645 fish.

As directed by 5 AAC 21.359. Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan, if, from July 20 through July 31, the projected inriver return of Kenai River 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 sport fisheries in the Kenai River. Based on assessment of the inriver return and escapement, the projected escapement is less than the escapement goal and closure of the sport fishery is needed.

PREVIOUS EMERGENCY ORDERS AFFECTED:

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-1-43-13, which prohibited retention of king salmon 20 inches or greater in length, but less than 55 inches in length in the Kenai River Drainage sport fishery is superseded.

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-1-24-13, which prohibited 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, 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.