

SPORT FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 2-SS-2-49-13

Issued at: Palmer, Wednesday, August 21, 2013

Effective Date: 6:00 a.m., Thursday, August 22, 2013

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December 31, 2013, unless superseded by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

EXPLANATION:

This emergency order rescinds Emergency Order No. 2-SS-2-48-13, issued in Palmer on Wednesday, August 13, 2013. This emergency order reestablishes the same regulatory changes outlined in 2-SS-2-48-13 and allows sport fishing on Fish Creek seven days per week. The bag and possession limit for salmon, other than king salmon, 16 inches or greater in length remains at three per day and in possession, of which all three may be coho salmon, for the waters of Fish Creek, Cottonwood Creek, and Wasilla Creek. Cottonwood Creek and Wasilla Creek remains a three-day fishery open each Saturday through Monday. Fish, Wasilla, and Cottonwood creeks are open to fishing only from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. each day. Other Knik Arm waters, including the Little Susitna River, Jim Creek, and the Eklutna Tailrace, remain unaffected by this emergency order.

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possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Knik Arm Drainages Area, (4)(A), (5)(A), and (11)(D) are superseded by this emergency order. Under this emergency order, the following provisions are effective beginning 6:00 a.m., Thursday, August 22, through 11:59 p.m. Tuesday, December 31, 2013:

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 Drainages Area.

(4) in the Cottonwood Creek drainage,

(A) from August 24 – December 31, from its mouth upstream to an ADF&G marker located one mile upstream from the Palmer Hayflat State Game Refuge access road, sport fishing is allowed only on Saturdays, Sundays, and Mondays from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; bag and possession limit for salmon, other than king salmon, 16 inches or greater in length is three fish, of which all three may be coho salmon;

(5) in the Fish Creek drainage,

(A) from August 22 – December 31, the waters from ADF&G regulatory markers located at its mouth upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located one-quarter mile upstream from the Knik-Goose Bay Road, are open to sport fishing from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., except that sport fishing for king salmon is closed; bag and possession limit for salmon, other than king salmon, 16 inches or greater in length is three fish, of which all three may be coho salmon;

(11) the Wasilla Creek drainage, including Rabbit Slough,

(D) from August 24 – December 31, downstream of the Alaska Railroad Bridge is open to sport fishing for salmon, except king salmon, on Saturdays, Sundays, and Mondays from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; bag and possession limit for salmon, other than king salmon, 16 inches or greater in length is three fish, of which all three may be coho salmon; a person who takes the bag limit of salmon from Wasilla Creek may not sport fish for any species of fish that same day in waters open to sport fishing for salmon;

Cora Campbell,
Commissioner

By delegation to:

Sam Ivey,
Area Management Biologist

JUSTIFICATION:

The run of coho salmon to Fish Creek appears to be strong and well above average. The sustainable escapement goal for coho salmon in Fish Creek is 1,200-4,400 fish. As of August 20, counts show 4,894 coho salmon have passed the weir and the current projected escapement of coho salmon in Fish Creek is estimated to be approximately 10,390 fish. Therefore it is warranted to increase the bag limit from two coho per day to three coho per day in Fish Creek and allow fishing 7 days per week. Based upon previous studies, there is a strong correlation between runs to Fish Creek and the other Knik Arm streams, specifically Cottonwood and Wasilla creeks. Therefore, it is warranted to increase the bag limit from two coho per day to three coho per day in Cottonwood Creek and Wasilla Creek and to add another day on these two weekend only fisheries. It is expected that escapements on these two systems, monitored by a post season foot count, will be average to above average under this management strategy.

It is not anticipated that the increased sport harvest from this emergency order will lower the escapement below desired escapement levels in Cottonwood, Fish, and Wasilla creeks.

PREVIOUS EMERGENCY ORDERS AFFECTED:

Emergency order No. 2-SS-2-48-13, which increased the daily bag and possession limit for coho salmon to 3 fish and extended the weekend only fisheries of Fish, Cottonwood, and Wasilla creeks with the addition of Mondays, is rescinded and replaced by this emergency order.

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.