

SPORT FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-7-16-14

Issued at: Homer, Wednesday, June 11, 2014

Effective Date: 12:01 a.m., Friday, June 13, 2014

Expiration Date: 11:59 p.m., Monday, June 30, 2014, unless superseded by subsequent emergency order.

EXPLANATION:

This emergency order supersedes Emergency Order 2-KS-7-01-14 issued February 27, 2014. This emergency order closes waters of the Anchor River drainage from its mouth upstream to the junction of the North and South forks to sport fishing; and prohibits king salmon fishing (including catch-and-release) while sport fishing within one mile of shore in the salt waters of Cook Inlet south of the latitude of the mouth of the Ninilchik River (60° 03.99' N. lat.) to the latitude of Bluff Point (59° 40.00' N. lat.). King salmon incidentally caught while fishing for other fish may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately. This emergency order is effective from 12:01 a.m., Friday, June 13, 2014, through 11:59 p.m., Monday, June 30, 2014.

REGULATION:

The provisions of 5 AAC 56.122. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area (a)(2)(C) and (a)(2)(E); and the provisions of 5 AAC 58.022. Waters; seasons; bag, possession, and size limits; and special provisions for Cook Inlet – Resurrection Bay Saltwater Area. (b)(1)(A) are superseded by this emergency order. Under this emergency order, the following provisions are effective, 12:01 a.m., Friday, June 13, 2014, through 11:59 p.m., Monday, June 30, 2014:

5 AAC 56.122. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area.

(a)(2) Anchor River drainage, except the Bridge Creek Reservoir:

(C) from its mouth upstream to the junction of the North and South forks sport fishing is closed;

(E) from its mouth upstream to the junction of the North and South forks sport fishing is closed;

5 AAC 58.022. Waters; seasons; bag, possession, and size limits; and special provisions for Cook Inlet – Resurrection Bay Saltwater Area.

(b)(1) in waters of Cook Inlet north of the latitude of Bluff Point (59° 40.00' N. lat.):

(A) south of the latitude of the mouth of the Ninilchik River (60° 03.99' N. lat.) to the latitude of Bluff Point (59° 40.00' N. lat.) and within one statute mile of shore, sport fishing for king salmon is closed; king salmon may not be retained or possessed; king salmon that are caught may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately;

Cora Campbell,
Commissioner

By delegation to:

Carol Kerkvliet
Fisheries Biologist II

JUSTIFICATION:

King salmon stocks in Cook Inlet and throughout Alaska are experiencing a period of below average run strength. Indices of abundance suggest king salmon run strength in the lower Kenai Peninsula is comparable with the below average run strength trends experienced by other king salmon stocks in lower and upper Kenai Peninsula streams.

Anchor River king salmon runs have been well below average since 2009. The sustainable escapement goal for king salmon in the Anchor River is 3,800–10,000 fish. The Anchor River escapement of king salmon through June 9 is 900 fish. Based on the 2009-2013 run timing, 29% of the escapement is counted by June 9. Although it is uncertain that the escapement goal for king salmon will be achieved, 2014 escapement counts contrasted against recent run timing indicates that it will not; therefore, restrictions are necessary to achieve the spawning escapement goal.

In the lower Cook Inlet marine fishery, king salmon of Cook Inlet origin generally have a higher probability of being harvested near shore than do king salmon from other locations. Mature king salmon (spawners) also tend to be harvested near shore at a greater rate than immature (non-local) king salmon. Therefore, it is justified to close fishing for king salmon in salt waters within one mile of shore while these locally spawning king salmon migrate through the area and into fresh water.

PREVIOUS EMERGENCY ORDERS AFFECTED:

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-7-01-14 closed the Anchor River to sport fishing each Wednesday during the king salmon season and reduced the waters of the Anchor River drainage open to sport fishing. Under this emergency order, waters open to sport fishing extended from the mouth to the downstream side of the Old Sterling Highway Bridge approximately 550 feet below the junction of the North and South forks. This emergency order is superseded.

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.