

SPORT FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 1-KS-F-05-15

Issued at: Haines, Monday, April 6,
2015.

Effective 12:01 A.M. Wednesday,
Date: April 15, 2015

Expiration Date: Thursday, December 31,
2015 at 11:59 p.m. unless superseded by
subsequent emergency order.

EXPLANATION:

This emergency order prohibits the retention of king salmon in the waters of Chilkat Inlet north of the ADF&G regulatory marker immediately north of Seduction Point April 15 through July 15.

REGULATION:

Consistent with stipulations within Lynn Canal and Chilkat River King Salmon Management Plan 5 AAC 33.384., the provisions of 5 AAC 47.021. (c) are added by this emergency order and become effective at 12:01 A.M. Wednesday, April 15, 2015.

5 AAC 47.021. Special provisions for seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the salt waters of the Southeast Alaska Area.

(c) In the Haines and Skagway vicinity:

(1) Chilkat Inlet, north of the ADF&G regulatory marker immediately north of Seduction Point, is closed to king salmon sport fishing from April 15 through July 15.

(2) In District 15, the waters of Lynn Canal north of the latitude of Little Island Light (5 AAC 33.200 (o)), the bag and possession limit is one king salmon, 28 inches or greater in length from April 15 through December 31.

Sam Cotten,
Commissioner

By delegation to:

Richard Chapell
Area Management Biologist
Division of Sport Fish

JUSTIFICATION:

The king salmon sport fishery in Chilkat Inlet is managed under the directives of the Lynn Canal and Chilkat River King Salmon Management Plan (5 AAC 33.384). This plan prescribes management measures to be implemented by the department for the king salmon sport fishery based upon the preseason projected inriver abundance of Chilkat River king salmon, inseason fisheries performance, and inriver stock assessment programs. Catch per unit effort data from the Haines area creel survey program in Chilkat Inlet correlates poorly with inriver abundance. Catch per unit effort data from department drift gillnet and fish wheel stock assessment projects in the lower Chilkat River provides inseason run strength assessment, but too late for effective inseason management of king salmon fisheries.

Based on Chilkat River king salmon age composition data from harvest and escapement sampling, sibling survival rates in the most recent four years (2010-2014), and average exploitation rates, the 2015 projected inriver run is 1,713 large fish (three ocean age and older, standard error = 676 large fish), which is below the lower end of the inriver abundance goal range (1,850 to 3,600 large fish) for the Chilkat River. At this projected abundance level, the Lynn Canal and Chilkat River King Salmon Management Plan prescribes closing sport fishing for king salmon in Chilkat Inlet north of Seduction Point through June 30.

Given the uncertainty in the preseason forecast and the failure to meet the inriver abundance goal in 2012-2014, additional fishery restrictions to conserve Chilkat River king salmon are warranted. Subsistence and commercial fisheries in Chilkat Inlet will remain closed through July 15. Approximately 200 large mature Chilkat River king salmon could be conserved by closing Chilkat Inlet to sport fish retention through July 15. Coded-wire tag recoveries indicate that Skagway-based anglers caught approximately 200 Chilkat River king salmon rearing in Taiya Inlet annually in 2013 and 2014. A bag and possession limit of one king salmon greater than 28 inches in length in Section 15-A could conserve approximately 100 fish.

DISTRIBUTION:

The distribution list for this emergency order is on file at the Region 1 Office of Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish, P. O. Box 110024, Douglas, AK 99824, (907) 465-4270.