

SPORT FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-2-10-15

Issued at: Palmer, Thursday, February 19, 2015

Effective Date: 6:00 a.m., Friday, May 1, 2015

Expiration Date: 11:59 p.m., Monday,
July 13, 2015, unless superseded by
subsequent emergency order.

EXPLANATION: This emergency order prohibits the use of bait and limits sport fishing gear to one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure while sport fishing in the Deshka River and all waters within a one-half mile radius of its confluence with the Susitna River. This emergency order is effective from 6:00 a.m., Friday, May 1, 2015, through 11:59 p.m., Monday, July 13, 2015.

REGULATION: The provisions of 5 AAC 61.112. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for Unit 1 of the Susitna River Drainage area. (6)(B) are superseded by this emergency order. Under this emergency order, the following provisions are effective, beginning 6:00 a.m., Friday, May 1, 2015, through 11:59 p.m., Monday, July 13, 2015:

5AAC 61.112. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for Unit 1 of the Susitna River Drainage Area.

(6) in the Deshka River drainage, including Trapper Lake,

(B) from its mouth upstream to ADF&G regulatory markers near Chijuk Creek (river mile 17), and in all waters within a one-half mile radius of its confluence with the Susitna River, king salmon may be taken from January 1 - July 13; from September 1 – July 13, only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used; from July 14 - August 31, bait may be used; the remainder of the drainage is closed from January 1 - December 31 to sport fishing for king salmon;

Sam Cotten,
Commissioner

By delegation to:

Sam Ivey,
Area Management Biologist

JUSTIFICATION: Susitna River king salmon and other king salmon stocks throughout Cook Inlet are experiencing a period of low productivity and, since 2007, below average run strength. The outlook for

Deshka River king salmon is for another below average run. Harvest restrictions in other areas of the Susitna River in 2015 will likely result in a significant amount of sport fishing effort in the Deshka River. Additional harvest associated with increased angler participation will jeopardize the attainment of the Deshka River escapement goal if bait is not prohibited. Similar restrictions to the Deshka River sport fishery over the past 2 years have resulted in achievement of the Deshka River Sustainable Escapement Goal of 13,000-28,000 king salmon.

It is anticipated that these restrictions will reduce harvest by as much as 50 percent on the Deshka River when combined with an annual limit reduction of five fish to two fish contained in another emergency order. This reduction is expected to provide the greatest potential for achieving escapement goals during 2015 yet continue to provide fishing opportunity throughout the season. Data gathered from the Deshka weir and staff surveys will be used to gauge run strength during the season.

PREVIOUS EMERGENCY ORDERS AFFECTED: Emergency Order No. 2-KS-2-08-15 establishes a combined annual limit of two king salmon 20 inches or greater in length for fish harvested in the Susitna River and the Little Susitna River drainages. This emergency order remains in effect from 6:00 a.m., Friday, May 1, 2015, through 11:59 p.m., Monday, July 13, 2015.

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-2-07-15 limits sport fishing gear to one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure only when fishing in the Susitna River drainage; prohibits a person, after taking a king salmon 20 inches or greater in length, from fishing for any species of finfish on the same day in any flowing waters open to sport fishing for king salmon in the Susitna River Drainage Area; prohibits the harvest of king salmon (any size) in Units 1 (except Deshka River), 2, 3, 5, and 6 of the Susitna River and in the Talachulitna River (within Unit 4); within Unit 4 (Yentna drainage), except for the Talachulitna River, harvest is allowed each Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday and retention of king salmon (any size) is prohibited each Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. This emergency order remains in effect from 6:00 a.m., Friday, May 1, 2015, through 11:59 p.m., Monday, July 13, 2015.

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.