

SPORT FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-2-18-16

Issued at: Palmer, Friday, June 10, 2016

Effective Date: 6:00 a.m. Saturday, June 11, 2016

Expiration Date: 11:59 p.m. Wednesday,
July 13, 2016, unless superseded by
subsequent emergency order.

EXPLANATION:

This emergency order supersedes Emergency Order No. 2-KS-2-06-16 issued on February 18, 2016, which established 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 restores the Cook Inlet annual limit of five king salmon 20 inches or greater in length for fish harvested in the Deshka River only. The combined annual limit of two king salmon 20 inches or greater in length for remainder of the Susitna River drainage and Little Susitna River remains in effect.

REGULATION:

The provisions of 5 AAC 61.110. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Susitna River Drainage Area. (1)(A) are superseded by this emergency order, and 5 AAC 60.122. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Knik Arm Drainages Area. (9)(A)(i) is added by this emergency order. Under this emergency order, the following provisions are effective, beginning 6:00 a.m. Saturday, June 11 through 11:59 p.m. Wednesday, July 13, 2016:

5 AAC 61.110. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Susitna River Drainage Area.

(a)(1) king salmon

(A) 20 inches or greater in length may be taken only from January 1 – July 13; bag and possession limit for king salmon is one fish; there is an annual limit of two fish from the Susitna River drainage, except the Deshka River, there is a combined annual limit of five, and a harvest record is required as specified in 5 AAC 75.006; a king salmon 20 inches or greater in length removed from the water shall be retained and becomes a part of the bag limit of the person originally hooking it; a person may not remove a king salmon from the water before releasing the fish;

5AAC 60.122. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Knik Arm Drainages Area.

(9) in the Little Susitna River drainage,

(A)(i) there is an annual limit of two king salmon 20 inches or greater in length from the Little Susitna River and Susitna River drainage, except the Deshka River, combined and a harvest record is required as specified in 5 AAC 75.006; a king salmon 20 inches or greater in length removed from the water shall be retained and becomes a part of the bag limit of the person originally hooking it; a person may not remove a king salmon from the water before releasing the fish;

Sam Cotten,
Commissioner

By delegation to:

Sam Ivey,
Area Management Biologist

JUSTIFICATION:

The Sustainable Escapement Goal (SEG) for the Deshka River is 13,000 – 28,000 king salmon. Through June 9, cumulative king salmon passage through the weir located at river mile 7 was 11,412 fish. On average, about 10% of the spawning escapement has passed the weir by this date. The run appears to be early similar to the past two seasons and run time models project achievement of the goal even after incorporating additional harvest due to this action.

The preseason strategy, aimed at reducing harvest in sport fisheries by up to 60% across the Susitna drainage, remains in place to conserve areas of the Susitna River drainage that may not be able to sustain harvest, such as those given stock of concern status by the Alaska Board of Fisheries. The reduced annual limit for systems other than the Deshka River remains a combined annual limit of two king salmon 20 inches or greater in length for fish harvested in the Little Susitna River and the Susitna River drainage, excluding Deshka River.

Staff surveys of Yentna and Parks Highway streams north of Willow are scheduled later this month and will be used to evaluate run strength and to base any inseason changes to the current management strategy on those systems if warranted. The department will continue to monitor weir counts and evaluate run strength on Deshka and Little Susitna rivers.

PREVIOUS EMERGENCY ORDERS AFFECTED:

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-2-06-16, which established a combined annual limit of two king salmon 20 inches or greater in length for fish harvested in the Susitna River drainage and the Little Susitna River is superseded to restore the five fish annual limit in the Deshka River.

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-05-16 imposes gear and harvest restrictions to sport fishing in Eastside Susitna River tributaries. This emergency order remains in effect from 6:00 a.m. Sunday, May 1 through 11:59 p.m. Wednesday, July 13, 2016.

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-07-16 imposes gear and harvest restrictions to sport fishing in Westside Susitna River tributaries. This emergency order remains in effect from 6:00 a.m. Sunday, May 1 through 11:59 p.m. Wednesday, July 13, 2016.

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-08-16 restricts sport fishing gear and harvest in the Little Susitna River drainage. It limits gear to one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure only. This emergency order remains in effect from 6:00 a.m. Sunday, May 1 through 11:59 p.m. Wednesday, July 13, 2016.

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.