

SPORT FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-2-23-16

Issued at: Palmer, Friday, June 24, 2016

Effective Date: 6:00 a.m., Tuesday, June 28, 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July 13, 2016, unless superseded by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-2-18-16 issued on June 10, 2016. This emergency order restores the Cook Inlet annual limit of five king salmon 20 inches or greater in length for fish harvested in both the Little Susitna and Deshka rivers only.

A separate emergency order restores the king salmon fishery on the Little Susitna River to seven days per week and allows use of multiple hooks per regulation, effective beginning the same time as this emergency order.

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 (1)(A) are superseded by this emergency order. Under this emergency order, the following provisions are effective, beginning 6:00 a.m., Tuesday, June 28 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 and Little Susitna rivers, 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;

Sam Cotten,
Commissioner

By delegation to:

Sam Ivey,
Area Management Biologist

JUSTIFICATION:

The SEG for the Little Susitna River is 900 – 1,800 king salmon based on a postseason aerial survey. Past comparisons of weir counts and aerial survey estimates indicate 40 – 60% of the fish passed through the weir are later counted in the aerial survey. Therefore, a weir based management target of 2,400 – 4,000 should achieve the SEG if at least 40% of the escapement is enumerated in the aerial survey. As of June 23, 2,463 king salmon have passed the Little Susitna weir and the projected escapement is expected to be within the goal range after incorporating an additional harvest of 350 fish 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 Little Susitna and Deshka rivers remains two king salmon 20 inches or greater in length for fish harvested in the Susitna River drainage, excluding Deshka and the Little Susitna River.

Surveys recently conducted by the department and weir counts to date on the Little Susitna and Deshka rivers indicate no further inseason changes to king salmon regulations at this time. The department will continue monitoring weir counts and will conduct more fish surveys throughout the remainder of the season.

PREVIOUS EMERGENCY ORDERS AFFECTED:

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-2-18-16, which established a combined annual limit of two king salmon 20 inches or greater in length for fish harvested in the Susitna River drainage (excluding the Deshka River) and the Little Susitna River is superseded to restore the five fish annual limit in both the Little Susitna River and Deshka River only.

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.