

SPORT FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 1-KS-R-28-17

Issued at Sitka, Monday, August 7,
2017.

Effective 12:01 a.m. Thursday,
Date: August 10, 2017

Expiration Date: 11:59 p.m. Saturday,
September 30, 2017 unless superseded by
subsequent emergency order.

EXPLANATION: This emergency order rescinds Emergency Order 1-KS-A-08-17 issued on March 6, 2017 and Emergency Order 1-KS-R-11-17 issued on April 10, 2017 and prohibits the retention of king salmon in all Southeast Alaska salt waters from August 10 –September 30, 2017.

REGULATION: Emergency Orders 1-KS-A-08-17 and 1-KS-R-11-17 are rescinded. Consistent with 5 AAC 39.222 *Policy for the management of sustainable salmon fisheries*, 5 AAC 47.055 *Southeast Alaska King Salmon Management Plan*, and AS 16.05.060 *Emergency orders*; the following provisions under this emergency order are effective from 12:01 a.m. Thursday, August 10 through Saturday, September 30, 2017.

5 AAC 47.020. General provisions for seasons and bag, possession, annual, and size limits for the salt waters of the Southeast Alaska Area.

(20) king salmon: retention of king salmon is prohibited, king salmon may not be retained or possessed; any king salmon caught must be released immediately and returned to the water unharmed.

Sam Cotten
Commissioner

By delegation to:

Bob Chadwick
Regional Management Coordinator
Division of Sport Fish

JUSTIFICATION: The Southeast Alaska king salmon sport fishery is managed under the directives of the *Southeast Alaska King Salmon Management Plan* (5 AAC 47.055). This plan prescribes management measures based upon the preseason abundance index determined by the Chinook Technical Committee of the Pacific Salmon Commission. The plan also directs the department to eliminate inseason regulatory changes, except those necessary for conservation purposes.

Many of the king salmon stocks that contribute to the Southeast Alaska commercial and recreational fisheries are experiencing record-low production. These stocks originate in Southeast Alaska, British Columbia, Washington, and Oregon. To comply with the Alaska Sustainable Salmon Fisheries Policy and the Pacific Salmon Treaty, extreme management measures are necessary to curtail harvests of these stocks. Retention of king salmon will be prohibited at 12:01 a.m. August 10, 2017 in the Southeast Alaska commercial and recreational fisheries and extend through September 30. Information on the status of stocks is still being collected and will determine management beyond September.

Most of the king salmon stocks that contribute to Southeast Alaska fisheries are exhibiting extremely poor production and will not meet escapement goals or management objectives in 2017. The stocks which are exhibiting low productivity would contribute about half of the remaining 2017 allowable catch (per the Pacific Salmon Treaty) in Southeast Alaska waters. Inseason information received from a variety of agency and academic sources all indicate that poor production conditions are currently occurring and will persist through at least 2018. Therefore it is imperative that Alaska take action to reduce harvest and conserve king salmon stocks with a focus on future production.

PREVIOUS EMERGENCY ORDERS AFFECTED:

Emergency Order 1-KS-A-08-17 issued March 6, 2017 established regulatory actions to reduce sport harvest of Unuk River king salmon. This emergency order closed a portion of northern Behm Canal to salmon fishing; reduced the king salmon bag and possession limit to one fish in west Behm Canal and Herring Bay Sport Terminal Harvest Area; postponed liberalizing regulations in the Herring Bay Sport Terminal Harvest Area; and increased the duration of the salmon closure in east Behm Canal while providing opportunity to harvest Whitman Lake hatchery king salmon in Herring Bay.

Emergency Order 1-KS-R-11-17 issued April 10, 2017 established regional king salmon regulations of a resident bag limit of two king salmon, 28 inches or greater in length; a nonresident bag limit of one king salmon, 28 inches or greater in length; a nonresident annual limit of three king salmon, 28 inches or greater in length; and the opportunity for resident anglers to use two rods from October through March per the *Southeast Alaska King Salmon Management Plan* (5 AAC 47.055) based on upon the 2017 preseason abundance index determined by the Chinook Technical Committee of the Pacific Salmon Commission of 1.27.

The following emergency orders specific to Southeast Alaska king salmon management will remain in effect:

Emergency Order No. 1-KS-F-05-17 prohibits the retention of king salmon in the waters of Section 15-A, Lynn Canal north of the ADF&G regulatory marker at Sherman Rock, including Chilkat Inlet, Chilkoot Inlet, Lutak Inlet, and Taiya Inlet remains in effect through 11:59 p.m. Sunday, December 31, 2017.

Emergency Order No. 1-KS-E-18-17 closes the waters of Gastineau Channel, within a 300-yard radius of the Wayside Park Fishing Dock (Channel Wayside fishing dock) to snagging and sport fishing for king salmon which are needed for hatchery broodstock remains in effect through 11:59 p.m. Thursday, August 31, 2017.

Emergency Order No. 1-KS-D-22-17 closes the saltwater area of Kasnyku Bay to sport fishing for king salmon to protect king salmon needed for broodstock at Hidden Falls Hatchery remains in effect through 11:59 p.m. Friday, September 1, 2017

Emergency Order No. 1-KS-D-27-17 closes the saltwater area of Bear Cove to sport fishing to protect king salmon needed for broodstock at Medvejie Hatchery remains in effect through 11:59 p.m. Thursday, August 31, 2017.

DISTRIBUTION:

The distribution list for this emergency order is on file at the Region 1 Office of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish, P. O. Box 110024, Douglas, AK 99811, (907) 747-5551.