

SPORT FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-1-14-18

Issued at: Soldotna, Monday, June 11, 2018

Effective Date: 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, June 13, 2018

Expiration Date: 11:59 p.m. Saturday, June 30, 2018,
unless superseded by subsequent emergency order.

EXPLANATION:

This emergency order restricts king salmon fishing in the Kasilof River. Specifically, it prohibits the retention of naturally-produced king salmon, reduces the bag and possession limit of hatchery-produced king salmon 20 inches or greater in length to one fish, and limits sport fishing gear to one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure in the Kasilof River. Naturally-produced king salmon caught may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately. A naturally-produced king salmon is a king salmon with an adipose fin intact.

REGULATION:

The provisions of 5 AAC 56.122. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area. (a)(8)(A)(i) and (ii) and (a)(8)(B)(ii) are superseded by this emergency order. Under this emergency order, the following provisions are effective beginning 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, June 13, through 11:59 p.m. Saturday, June 30, 2018.

5 AAC 56.122. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area.

(a)(8) Kasilof River drainage, excluding Crooked Creek and Tustumena Lake and its tributaries:

- (A)(i) the bag and possession limit for king salmon 20 inches or greater in length is one hatchery king salmon; a hatchery king salmon 20 inches or greater in length that is removed from the water must be retained and becomes 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;
- (ii) naturally-produced king salmon may not be retained; a person may not remove a naturally-produced king salmon from the water before releasing the fish;

(B) the following special provisions apply in that portion downstream of the Sterling Highway Bridge:

- (ii) in flowing waters, from May 1 – June 30, only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used;

Sam Cotten
Commissioner

By delegation to:

Matt G Miller
Fisheries Biologist IV

JUSTIFICATION:

As provided by 5 AAC 57.160. *Kenai River and Kasilof River Early-Run King Salmon Management Plan* (c), the department shall manage the Kasilof River early-run king salmon sport and guided sport fisheries to achieve the sustainable escapement goal (SEG), to provide reasonable harvest opportunities over the entire run while ensuring adequate escapement of naturally-produced king salmon, and to minimize the effects of conservation actions for the Kenai River on the Kasilof River.

The department issued an emergency order (EO No. 2-KS-1-13-18) Monday, June 11, 2018 to prohibit the retention of early-run tributary spawning king salmon in the Kenai River drainage. This action will likely result in an increase in the sport fishing effort and catch of king salmon in the Kasilof River. The department manages the Kasilof River king salmon sport fishery to achieve a sustainable escapement goal of 650 to 1,700 naturally-produced king salmon as monitored through a weir at a department facility located on Crooked Creek.

Production of hatchery-produced king salmon to enhance the Kasilof River early-run king salmon fishery originates from naturally-produced king salmon that are surplus to Crooked Creek escapement needs. In addition, hatchery-produced fish that reach the weir may be used to supplement king salmon stocking programs at other Southcentral Alaska locations, thereby providing increased harvest opportunity in the Kasilof River early-run king salmon sport fishery as well as other Southcentral Alaska king salmon sport fisheries.

This emergency order to restrict the early-run king salmon sport fishery in the Kasilof River during 2018 is in part, a continuation of an incremental approach to maintain harvest opportunity while assuring the SEG of naturally-produced king salmon and stocking goals can be achieved.

DISTRIBUTION:

The distribution list for this emergency order is on file at the Region 2 Office of Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish, 333 Raspberry Road, Anchorage, AK 99518, (907) 267-2218.