

SPORT FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 2-RCL-7-01-22

Issued at: Homer, Monday, December 20, 2021

Effective Date: 12:01 a.m. Saturday, January 1, 2022

Expiration Date: 11:59 p.m. Saturday, December 31, 2022, unless superseded by subsequent emergency order.

EXPLANATION:

This emergency order closes east Cook Inlet beach areas from the mouth of the Kenai River to the southernmost tip of the Homer Spit to the taking of all clam species.

REGULATION:

The provisions of 5 AAC 58.022. (a)(14)(A) are superseded by this emergency order. Under this emergency order, the following provisions are effective 12:01 a.m. Saturday, January 1 through 11:59 p.m. Saturday, December 31, 2022:

5 AAC 58.022. Waters; seasons; bag, possession, annual, and size limits; and special provisions for Cook Inlet – Resurrection Bay Saltwater Area.

(a)(14) razor clams: may be taken from January 1 – December 31 as follows:

(A) from the mouth of the Kenai River to the southernmost tip of the Homer Spit is closed to the taking of all clam species.

Doug Vincent-Lang,
Commissioner

By delegation to:

Mike Booz

Mike Booz

Lower Cook Inlet Sport Fish Area Manager

JUSTIFICATION:

In 2021, adult (>3.1”) razor clam abundances declined from the 2020 abundances at Ninilchik beaches, but increased by 12% at Clam Gulch beaches. The 2021 adult abundances at both beaches were still below their historical averages. Juvenile razor clam abundances were above their historical averages at Ninilchik and Clam Gulch beaches. From 2020 to 2021, natural mortality of adult razor clams was high at both beaches with approximately 69% lost at Ninilchik beaches and approximately 84% lost at Clam Gulch beaches. The causes of this high natural mortality rate remain unknown, but may include a combination of heavy surf, habitat changes, environmental stressors, and predation. Razor clam studies will be conducted again in the spring of 2022 on Ninilchik and Clam Gulch beaches and will be used to assess potential harvest opportunity after adult abundances are available in late May. Based on the 2021 studies, there may be sufficient abundances of adult size clams at the Clam Gulch beaches to support a limited harvest opportunity if survival rates are moderate.

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.