

# SPORT FISHING

## *Emergency Order*

ALASKA DEPARTMENT  
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 3-PS-004-99

Issued at Nome, Alaska  
4:30 p.m. ADT, June 19, 1999

Effective Date: 12:00 p.m. ADT  
Monday, June 21, 1999

Expiration Date: July 31, 1999  
Unless superseded by subsequent emergency  
order.

### EXPLANATION:

This emergency order closes all marine and fresh waters to sport fishing for pink salmon from Cape Rodney in the west to Topkok Head in the east (the Nome Subdistrict). This area includes the fresh water drainages of the Sinuk, Cripple, Penny, Snake, Nome, Flambeau, Eldorado, Bonanza, and Solomon rivers and all marine waters from Cape Rodney to Topkok Head, including Safety Sound and Bonanza Channel. Sport fishers may not take or attempt to take pink salmon in these waters. Any pink salmon accidentally captured must be immediately released.

### REGULATION:

5AAC 70.050. WATERS CLOSED TO SPORT FISHING is amended by adding: (s) all marine and fresh water from Cape Rodney to Topkok Head are closed to sport fishing for pink salmon, all pink salmon caught must be immediately released.

Frank Rue  
Commissioner

By delegation to:

Alfred L. DeCicco  
Area Management Biologist

### JUSTIFICATION:

Pink salmon runs in Norton Sound alternate between strong and weak runs. During the last eight years, odd year pink salmon escapements in Nome subdistrict rivers have been well below historic levels and the levels that the department staff believes are needed to maintain healthy runs. A very weak return is expected during 1999. There will be no commercial fishery for pink salmon in the Nome Subdistrict, and it is anticipated that subsistence fisheries for pink salmon may also be closed. In order to protect the few pink salmon expected to return in 1999 and to comply with the subsistence preference, the Department considers it prudent to close waters in the Nome Subdistrict to sport fishing for pink salmon.

Department staff will be flying frequent surveys to monitor salmon escapements and using counting towers in several drainages to track the progress of runs. If a stream appears to have a pink salmon run such that it will allow for adequate spawning escapement and subsistence harvest, these restrictions on sport fishing will be lifted in that area. Otherwise, the restrictions will remain in place until this emergency order expires on July 31.

Over the past ten years, increasingly restrictive measures have been taken in the Nome area in an attempt to encourage increased salmon escapements. Several restoration measures are also in place. Heavy fishing effort in the Nome area combined with other influences have caused some local salmon stocks to reach dangerously low levels. It is hoped that restrictive fishing measures combined with restoration efforts will eventually restore salmon runs to a level that can sustain local harvest demands.

DISTRIBUTION:

The distribution list for this emergency order is on file at the Region 3 Office of Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish, 1300 College Road, Fairbanks, AK 99701, (907) 459-7207.