

SPORT FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 3-KS-03-09

Issued at: Glennallen, Tuesday June 23, 2009

Effective Date: 12:01 a.m. Monday June 29, 2009

Expiration Date: December 31, 2009, unless superseded by subsequent emergency order.

EXPLANATION:

This emergency order rescinds emergency order 3-KS-02-09 issued on Wednesday June 10, 2009. This emergency order closes the Gulkana River drainage to fishing for king salmon effective 12:01 a.m. Monday June 29, 2009. This closure extends to the ADF&G marker located approximately 500 yards downstream of the confluence between the Gulkana River and the Copper River. The use of bait and treble hooks in these waters is also prohibited.

This emergency order also reduces the annual limit for king salmon 20 inches or more in length in the Upper Copper River drainage from four to two fish. In addition, no more than one king salmon of the two fish annual limit may be retained from any individual tributary or the mainstem of the Copper River, excluding the Gulkana River.

REGULATION:

The provisions of **5 AAC 52.022. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Upper Copper River and Upper Sustina River Area.** (3)(A) and **5 AAC 52.023. Special provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Upper Copper River and Upper Susitna River Area.** (9)(B) and (G) are superseded by this emergency order. Under this emergency order, the following provisions are effective, beginning 12:01 a.m. Monday June 29, 2009:

5 AAC 52.022. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Upper Copper River and Upper Sustina River Area.

(3) king salmon:

(A) 20 inches or greater in length; bag and possession limit of one fish; annual limit of two fish, no more than one king salmon of the two fish annual limit may be retained from any individual tributary or the mainstem of the Copper River, excluding the Gulkana River; a harvest record is required as specified in 5 AAC 52.024; a 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.

5 AAC 52.023. Special provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Upper Copper River and Upper Susitna River Area.

(9) in the Gulkana River drainage

(B) only unbaited, single-hook, artificial lures may be used in that portion of the mainstem of the Gulkana River upstream from the Richardson Highway Bridge to an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately at an unnamed creek flowing into the Gulkana

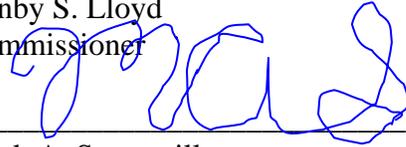
River about seven and one-half miles upstream from the confluence with the West Fork of the Gulkana River;

(G) all waters downstream of the confluence of the Middle Fork to an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 500 yards downstream of the confluence with the Copper River;

(iii) sport fishing for king salmon is closed; king salmon may not be taken or possessed and must be released immediately and returned to the water unharmed;

Denby S. Lloyd
Commissioner

by delegation to:


Mark A. Somerville
Area Management Biologist

JUSTIFICATION:

The 2009 king salmon return to the Gulkana River drainage is currently less than expected. Through June 21 the cumulative expanded count at the Gulkana River counting tower was 96 king salmon. The average count since 2002 through this date is 701 king salmon and the lowest prior cumulative count for this date was 270 king salmon in 2006. Angler reports during the last two weeks indicate king salmon are in the river below the counting tower, but catch rates are well below average. Gulkana River king salmon migratory timing and five year average harvest rates indicate insufficient numbers of king salmon to sustain the king salmon sport fishery and still attain adequate spawning escapement in the Gulkana River. Consistent with 5 AAC 24.361, Copper River King Salmon Fishery Management Plan, (c)(2)(D) fishing for king salmon is closed in the Gulkana River drainage down to the ADF&G marker located approximately 500 yards downstream of the confluence with the Copper River for the remainder of the king salmon sport fishing season. In addition, only unbaited, single-hook, artificial lures may be used in that portion of the Gulkana River upstream from the Richardson Highway Bridge to an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately at an unnamed creek flowing into the Gulkana River about seven and one-half miles upstream from the confluence with the West Fork of the Gulkana River. Further action may be required throughout the Copper River drainage depending on run strength in other tributaries as the season progresses.

This emergency order also reduces the annual limit for king salmon 20 inches or more in length in the Upper Copper River drainage from four to two fish. In addition, no more than one king salmon of the two fish annual limit may be retained from any individual tributary or the mainstem of the Copper River, excluding the Gulkana River.

DISTRIBUTION:

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