

SPORT FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 2-RS-1-43-10

Issued at: Soldotna, Tuesday, August 10, 2010

Effective Date: 12:01 a.m., Thursday, August 12, 2010

Expiration Date: 11:59 p.m. Friday, August 20, 2010, unless superseded by subsequent emergency order.

EXPLANATION:

This emergency order closes sport fishing for sockeye salmon in the Russian River and the Kenai River “fly-fishing-only waters” at the confluence of the Russian River, including that portion of the Kenai River from ADF&G regulatory markers located approximately 300 yards upstream of the public boat launch at Sportsman’s Landing downstream to the power line. This closure prohibits all sport fishing for sockeye salmon, including catch-and-release fishing. Sockeye salmon may not be retained or possessed; sockeye salmon caught while fishing for other species may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately. This emergency order is effective at 12:01 a.m., Thursday, August 12, 2010, through the end of the sockeye salmon season on August 20.

REGULATION:

The provisions of 5 AAC 57.122 Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Middle Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area. (1)(D),(E), and (F) are superseded by this emergency order. Under this emergency order, the following provisions are effective beginning at 12:01 a.m., Thursday, August 12, 2010 through 11:59 p.m., Friday, August 20, 2010.

5 AAC 57.122 Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Middle Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area.

(1) the following waters of the Middle Section of Kenai River drainage are open to sport fishing, only as follows:

(D) from July 15 – May 1, the Russian River Sanctuary, including waters upstream from ADF&G regulatory markers located just downstream of the ferry crossing on the Kenai River to ADF&G regulatory markers located approximately 300 yards upstream of the public boat launch at Sportsman’s Landing (including the waters around the upstream end of the island near the Russian River mouth) and the Russian River from its mouth upstream 100 yards to ADF&G regulatory markers is open to sport fishing, except sockeye salmon; sockeye salmon may not be retained or possessed; sockeye salmon caught while fishing for other species may not be removed from the waters and must be released immediately;

(E) the waters of the Kenai River near the confluence of the Russian River, from the power line crossing on the Kenai River upstream to the Ferry Crossing, is closed to sport fishing for sockeye salmon; sockeye salmon may not be retained or possessed; sockeye salmon caught while fishing for other species may not be removed from the waters and must be released immediately;

(F) the waters of the Russian River from its mouth upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 600 yards downstream from the falls are closed to sport fishing for sockeye salmon; sockeye salmon may not be retained or possessed; sockeye salmon caught while fishing for other

species may not be removed from the waters and must be released immediately;

Denby S. Lloyd,
Commissioner

By delegation to:

Jason A. Pawluk
Assistant Area Management Biologist

JUSTIFICATION:

The Russian River Sockeye Salmon Management Plan 5 AAC 57.150 (d)(2) stipulates that if the department is not able to project that the escapement goal of late-run Russian River sockeye salmon will be achieved, the commissioner shall, by emergency order, modify the Kenai River drainage sport fishery to achieve the escapement goal by prohibiting sockeye salmon fishing in the Kenai and Russian rivers fly-fishing only waters.

The late-run Russian River sockeye salmon spawning escapement goal is 30,000 to 110,000 fish. On average, approximately 32,600 sockeye salmon have passed the weir by August 9. At this time, only 15,519 sockeye salmon have passed the weir. The department is projecting an escapement of 25,600, indicating that with additional harvest it is likely the escapement goal will not be achieved. Recent stream survey index counts of sockeye salmon in the Russian River downstream of the weir, and reports from guided and unguided anglers fishing the Kenai River upstream from Skilak Lake, indicate relatively low sockeye salmon abundance. Therefore, it is warranted to close sport fishing for late-run sockeye salmon in the Kenai and Russian rivers fly-fishing only waters as specified in the Russian River Sockeye Salmon Management Plan.

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.