

# SPORT FISHING

## *Emergency Order*

ALASKA DEPARTMENT  
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 3-KS-03-11

Issued at: Glennallen, Wednesday June 22, 2011

Effective Date: 12:01 a.m. Saturday June 25, 2011

Expiration Date: August 11, 2011, unless superseded by subsequent emergency order.

### EXPLANATION:

This emergency order reduces the annual limit for king salmon 20 inches or greater in length in the Upper Copper River drainage from four to two fish. This emergency order also prohibits retention of king salmon in all flowing waters of the Copper River upstream of the Klutina River effective 12:01 a.m. Saturday June 25, 2011. The use of bait and treble hooks in these waters is also prohibited.

In addition, no more than one king salmon of the two fish annual limit may be retained from any individual tributary of the Copper River beginning June 25, 2011.

### 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. (a)(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. (3), (3)(A), and (9)(B), and 5 AAC 52.024. Harvest record required; annual limit. (c) are superseded and 5 AAC 52.023. (33) is added by this emergency order. Under this emergency order, the following provisions are effective, beginning 12:01 a.m. Saturday June 25, 2011:

#### **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.**

(a)(3) king salmon: may be taken only from January 1 – July 19, as follows;

(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 mainstem of the Copper River downstream of the upstream bank of the Klutina 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.**

(3) in the Copper River drainage, in that portion of the mainstem of the Copper River downstream of the upstream bank of the Klutina River,

(33) in all flowing waters of the Copper River drainage and its tributaries, upstream of the upstream bank of the Klutina River,

(A) only unbaited, single-hook artificial lures may be used;

(B) king salmon may not be retained or possessed and must be released immediately and returned to the water unharmed.

**5 AAC 52.024. Harvest record required; annual limit.**

(c) In the waters described in (a) of this section, the annual limit for king salmon 20 inches or greater in length is two per person.

Cora Campbell  
Commissioner

by delegation to: \_\_\_\_\_

  
Mark A. Somerville  
Area Management Biologist

**JUSTIFICATION:**

The *Copper River King Salmon Fishery Management Plan* directs the Department to manage the Copper River fisheries to achieve a sustainable escapement goal in the upper Copper River of 24,000 or more king salmon. A total of 17,370 king salmon have been harvested within the Copper River District commercial gillnet fishery as of June 17. This is 10,308 fish below the recent 10-year average of 27,678 king salmon. Inriver assessment projects also support that the Copper River king salmon run is less than expected. Cumulative catch rates through June 20 in the Native Village of Eyak sampling fishwheels are the second lowest for this date since the sampling project was begun in 2003. As of June 20, a total of 180 king salmon have passed the Gulkana River counting tower. Cumulative counts from 2002 – 2010, through June 20, have averaged 603 king salmon with only 1 out of 9 years observing less than 180 king salmon past the tower by that date. Copper 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 a spawning escapement of 24,000 or more king salmon in the Copper River drainage. Additionally, Gulkana River king salmon migratory timing and average passage past the Gulkana River king salmon counting tower since 2002 indicate insufficient numbers of king salmon to sustain the king salmon sport fishery on that river and attain sufficient spawning escapement. Therefore, restriction of the king salmon sport harvest is warranted. Further action to restrict or liberalize the Upper Copper River king salmon sport fishery may be required dependent on run strength as the season progresses.

**DISTRIBUTION:**

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