

# SPORT FISHING

## *Emergency Order*

ALASKA DEPARTMENT  
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-2-07-12

Issued at: Palmer, Tuesday, May 1, 2012

Effective Date: 6:00 a.m., Tuesday, May 15, 2012

Expiration Date: 11:59 p.m., Friday, July 13, 2012, unless superseded by subsequent emergency order.

### **EXPLANATION:**

This emergency order reduces the annual limit for king salmon 20 inches or longer from five fish to two fish and limits sport fishing gear to one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure only when fishing in the Little Susitna River drainage. Single-hook is defined as a hook with only one point. In addition, this emergency order also prohibits the retention of king salmon (any size) each Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday beginning Tuesday, May 15, 2012. Catch-and-release fishing is allowed, but king salmon may not be retained or possessed Tuesday–Thursday; king salmon caught may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately. King salmon may be retained on each Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday in the Little Susitna River.

Any king salmon recorded before Tuesday, May 15, on the harvest portion of an Alaska sport fishing license or harvest record card does not count against the two king salmon annual limit after 6 a.m., Tuesday, May 15, 2012, but does count against the Cook Inlet annual limit of five king salmon.

This emergency order is effective from 6:00 a.m., Tuesday, May 15, 2012, through 11:59 p.m., Friday, July 13, 2012. The area affected by this emergency order includes all waters open to king salmon fishing within the Little Susitna River drainage from its mouth upstream to the Parks Highway.

### **REGULATION:**

The provisions of 5 AAC 60.122. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Knik Arm Drainage Area. (9)(A) and (9)(B) are superseded by this emergency order. Under this emergency order, the following provisions are effective, beginning 6:00 a.m., Tuesday, May 15, 2012, through 11:59 p.m., Friday, July 13, 2012:

**5AAC 60.122. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Knik Arm Drainage Area.**

(9) in the Little Susitna River drainage,

(A) from January 1 – July 13, in flowing waters from its mouth upstream to the Parks Highway sport fishing for king salmon is open; bag and possession limit for king salmon 20 inches or greater in length is one fish; from May 15 – July 13 king salmon may only be retained on Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday; a person may not remove a king salmon from the water before releasing the fish; there is an annual limit of two king salmon greater than 20 inches in length and a harvest record is required as specified in 5 AAC 60.124; any king salmon recorded before Tuesday, May 15, does not count against the two king salmon annual limit 6:00 a.m., Tuesday, May 15, but does count against the Cook Inlet annual limit of five king salmon;

(B) from October 1 – May 14, in flowing waters from its mouth upstream to the Parks Highway, only unbaited, artificial lures may be used; from May 15 – July 13, in flowing waters from its mouth upstream to the Parks Highway, only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used; from July 14 – August 5, in flowing waters from its mouth upstream to the Parks Highway, only unbaited, artificial lures may be used;

Cora Campbell,  
Commissioner

By delegation to:

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Sam Ivey,  
Area Management Biologist

**JUSTIFICATION:**

The department monitors escapement on 24 streams within the Northern Cook Inlet Area, of which 17 have established escapement goals. Aerial index counts and a weir count on the Deshka River indicate king salmon returns have ranged from below average to poor since 2007. Fewer than half the escapement goals were achieved 2008-2011. The Little Susitna River king salmon sustainable escapement goal is 900–1,800 fish. Escapements were 589 fish in 2010 and 887 fish in 2011, despite being closed partway through the season in both years. It is anticipated that restricting harvest to Friday–Monday will reduce harvest by as much as 50 percent when combined with an annual limit reduction of five fish to two fish and one single-hook only requirement, adding approximately 400 fish to the escapement count and providing the greatest potential for achieving the escapement goal during 2012. Failure to achieve escapement goals over recent years combined with uncertainty over how quickly returns may recover justify starting the 2012 season with these restrictions. Restrictions may be relaxed late in the season if escapement goals are projected to be achieved and additional harvest is available.

**DISTRIBUTION:**

The distribution list for this emergency order is on file at the Region II Office of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish, 333 Raspberry Road, Anchorage, AK 99518, (907) 267-2218.