

SPORT FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 2-SS-2-51-12

Issued at: Palmer, Wednesday, August 8, 2012

Effective Date: 6:00 a.m., Friday, August 10, 2012

Expiration Date: 11:59 p.m. December 31, 2012, unless superseded by subsequent emergency order.

EXPLANATION:

This emergency reduces the bag and possession limit for salmon, other than king salmon, 16 inches or greater in length, to three fish, of which no more than one may be a coho salmon in Jim Creek effective 6:00 a.m., Friday, August 10, 2012. In addition, fishing is open only from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

REGULATION:

The provisions of 5 ACC 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 Drainages Area. (8)(F) are added by this emergency order. Under this emergency order, the following provisions are effective beginning 6 a.m., Friday, August 10, 2012;

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 Drainages Area.

(8) in the Knik River drainage, including Jim Creek and the Eklutna Tailrace, as follows:

(F) in Jim Creek; the bag and possession limit for salmon, other than king salmon, 16 inches or greater in length is three fish, of which only one may be a coho salmon; sport fishing for any finfish species is closed from 6:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.;

Cora Campbell,
Commissioner

By delegation to:

Sam Ivey,
Area Management Biologist

JUSTIFICATION:

The coho salmon fishery at Jim Creek has grown since 2006 and has become the largest fishery in Knik Arm in terms of harvest. Jim Creek experienced below average run strength in 2010 and 2011 and failed to attain the sustainable escapement goal (SEG) of 450–700 fish as indexed by an annual foot survey of McRoberts Creek, a tributary within the Jim Creek drainage. The 2012 run of coho salmon to Jim Creek again appears to be below average. While angler reports of fishing success have improved recently, fishing success has been sporadic and below average for this time of the season. Staff surveys

conducted late last week and again on Tuesday, August 7, indicated similar findings as surveys conducted the past two seasons with fewer fish than optimal for achieving the escapement goal on the Jim Creek system. Given the weak showing of coho salmon in Jim Creek, it is warranted to restrict recreational fishing activity at this time. Fish, Cottonwood, and Wasilla creeks are excluded from this restriction because the coho salmon escapement goal is expected to be achieved at Fish Creek and run strength at Cottonwood and Wasilla creeks typically mirrors that of Fish Creek.

The department will continue to monitor run strength at Jim Creek through boat surveys of upper Jim Creek and Leaf Lake. If run strength improves to a level that can support a larger harvest, restrictions to the sport fishery may be rescinded. However, additional restrictions are possible if the run does not improve.

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.