

SPORT FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 3-KS-01-12

Issued at: Fairbanks, Friday, April 13, 2012

Effective date: 12:01 a.m., Friday, June 1, 2012

Expiration Date: 11:59 p.m. Wednesday, July 25, 2012, unless superseded by subsequent emergency order.

EXPLANATION:

This emergency order closes all flowing waters to sport fishing for king salmon in Kuskokuak Slough between Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) regulatory markers located at the upstream and downstream mouth of the slough including all waters of the Old Kuskokuak Slough; the Kisaralik, Kasigluk, and Kwethluk River drainages to their confluence with Kuskokuak Slough; the Tuluksak River drainage including its confluence with the Kuskokwim River and downstream to the upstream side of Mishevik Slough; the George River drainage including its confluence with the Kuskokwim River and downstream approximately one-half mile to an ADF&G regulatory marker; the Aniak River drainage to ADF&G regulatory markers at its confluence with the Kuskokwim River effective 12:01 a.m. Friday, June 1, 2012.

REGULATION:

The provisions of 5 AAC 71.010. Seasons and bag, possession, and size limits for the Kuskokwim-Goodnews Area. (c)(1)(A) and (c)(3)(A) are superseded by this emergency order. Under this emergency order, the following provisions are effective, 12:01 a.m., Friday, June 1, 2012, through 11:59 p.m. Wednesday, July 25, 2012:

5 AAC 71.010. Seasons and bag, possession, and size limits for the Kuskokwim-Goodnews Area.

(c)(3) in the Aniak River drainage,

(A) sportfishing for king salmon is closed. King salmon may not be retained or possessed; king salmon unintentionally caught while fishing for other species may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately.

(c)(10) in all flowing waters of the Kwethluk, Kisaralik, Kasigluk river drainages, and Kuskokuak Slough, the Tuluksak River drainage including its confluence with the Kuskokwim River and downstream to the upstream side of Mishevik Slough, and the George River drainage including its confluence with the Kuskokwim River and downstream approximately one-half mile to a ADF&G regulatory marker, sport fishing for king salmon is closed. King salmon may not be retained or possessed; king salmon unintentionally caught while fishing for other species may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately.

Cora Campbell
Commissioner

By delegation to:

John Chythlook
Kuskokwim-Goodnews Area Biologist

JUSTIFICATION:

The outlook for Kuskokwim River king salmon in 2012 is similar to 2011 when the Kuskokwim River experienced an estimated total run of 132,000 and spawning escapement of 73,000 fish.

In 2011, the Kwethluk and Tuluksak rivers did not achieve king salmon sustainable escapement goals (SEG's) for the fourth and fifth consecutive years, respectively. The Kisaralik and Kasigluk rivers, due to their close proximity to the Kwethluk River, would likely see an increase in fishing effort if they remained open to harvest. In order to protect the Kisaralik and Kasigluk rivers king salmon stocks, these rivers will also close to king salmon harvest at the same time as the Kwethluk River. Kuskokuak Slough drains the Kwethluk and Kisaralik/Kasigluk rivers; therefore closure of the slough to fishing is viewed as a necessary conservation measure in addition to the closure of these rivers. The George River has not achieved the SEG of 3,100 to 7,900 king salmon in three of the past four years. Aerial survey indices on Aniak River tributaries, Kipchuck and Salmon Rivers, were among the lowest on record in 2011. Both state and federal subsistence fisheries for king salmon will have closures concurrent with the sport fishery closure.

The Department will continue to evaluate inseason run strength and take appropriate management actions to ensure that escapement requirements are met. If inseason stock assessment information indicates that the king salmon escapement goals in these Kuskokwim River drainages will be met, restrictions will be relaxed.

DISTRIBUTION:

The distribution list for this emergency order is on file at the Region III Office of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport, 1300 College Road, Fairbanks, AK 99701, (907) 459-7357.