

# SPORT FISHING

## *Emergency Order*

ALASKA DEPARTMENT  
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No.: 3-KS-06-12

Issued at: Fairbanks, Tuesday July 10, 2012

Effective Date: 6:00 p.m. Wednesday July 11, 2012

Expiration Date: August 15, 2012, unless  
superseded by subsequent emergency order.

### EXPLANATION:

This emergency order closes all waters to sport fishing for king salmon and prohibits the use of bait while sport fishing in the Unalakleet and Shaktoolik river drainages effective 6:00 p.m. Wednesday, July 11, 2012.

### REGULATION:

In accordance with 5 AAC 04.395. Subdistricts 5 and 6 of the Norton Sound District and the Unalakleet River King Salmon Management Plan, the provisions of 5 AAC 70.011. Seasons and bag, possession, and size limits for the Northwestern Area (c)(9)(A and B) are superseded by this emergency order and the provisions of 5 AAC 70.030. Methods, means, and general provisions – Finfish (f) are added. Under this emergency order, the following provisions are effective beginning 6:00 p.m. Wednesday July 11, 2012:

#### **5 AAC 70.011. SEASONS AND BAG, POSSESSION, AND SIZE LIMITS FOR THE NORTHWESTERN AREA.**

(c)(9)(A and B) In all waters of the Unalakleet and Shaktoolik river drainages 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.

#### **5 AAC 70.030. METHODS, MEANS, AND GENERAL PROVISIONS – FINFISH.**

(f) In the Shaktoolik and Unalakleet rivers, the use of bait is prohibited.

Cora Campbell  
Commissioner

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

Brendan Scanlon  
Northwest Area Management Biologist

**JUSTIFICATION:**

Although it is still early in the run, the projected escapement goal for king salmon will not be reached in 2012. Escapement counts of king salmon at the North River tower on the Unalakleet River are below historic averages. As of July 7th only 90 king salmon had passed the counting tower. From 2007– 2011 an average of 241 king salmon had passed the counting tower by this date. Consistent with 5 AAC 04.395. Subdistricts 5 and 6 of the Norton Sound District and the Unalakleet River King Salmon Management Plan, when the projected escapement is below the lower end of the escapement goal, all fishing will be closed.

The Department does not have a stock assessment project in the Shaktoolik River, but the king salmon run generally cycles in accordance with Unalakleet stocks. Unalakleet River test fishery indices are also below historic averages for this date. The elimination of sport fishing for king salmon in the Unalakleet and Shaktoolik rivers will provide protection for returning fish. The prohibition of bait is intended to minimize catch-and-release mortality for king salmon incidentally caught while sport fishing for other species.

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 goal in the Unalakleet River 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 Fish, 1300 College Road, Fairbanks, AK 99701, (907) 459-7228.