

SPORT FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No.: 3-KS-04-13

Issued at: Fairbanks, Wednesday, May 29, 2013

Effective Date: 12:01 a.m. Monday, June 17, 2013

Expiration Date: August 15, 2013, unless superseded
by subsequent emergency order.

EXPLANATION:

This emergency order prohibits the retention of king salmon in all waters of the Unalakleet and Shaktoolik river drainages, effective 12:01 a.m., Monday, June 17, 2013, and prohibits the use of bait while sport fishing in these rivers.

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 Seasons and bag, possession, and size limits for the Northwestern Management Area (c)(9)(A and B) are superseded by this emergency order and the provisions of 5 AAC 70.030.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, 12:01 a.m. Monday, June 17, 2013:

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, king salmon may not be retained or possessed. King salmon caught 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

Brendan Scanlon
Northwest and North Slope Area Biologist

JUSTIFICATION:

Preseason projections indicate that king salmon runs into the Unalakleet and Shaktoolik rivers will be poor. The king salmon Biological Escapement Goal (BEG) at the North River counting tower on the Unalakleet River is 1,200 – 2,600 fish, and has been met just 4 times in the previous 10 years (2003 – 2012). According to the *Subdistricts 5 and 6 of the Norton Sound District and the Unalakleet River King Salmon Management Plan* (5 AAC 04.395), if the marine waters subsistence fishery is restricted to less than two 48-hour periods, the sport fishery will be restricted to catch-and-release fishing.

The Department does not have a stock assessment project in the Shaktoolik River, but the king salmon run generally cycles in accordance with Unalakleet River stocks. The elimination of sport harvests of king salmon in the Unalakleet and Shaktoolik rivers will provide protection for returning fish. The prohibition of bait while sport fishing is intended to minimize catch-and-release mortality for king salmon.

The Department will evaluate inseason run strength and take appropriate management actions to ensure that escapement requirements are met and continue to provide fishing opportunity throughout the run. 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 99701, (907) 459-7228.