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Advisory Announcement

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UPPER COOK INLET COMMERCIAL FISHING ANNOUNCEMENT No. 18 EMERGENCY ORDER NUMBER 2S-18-20

Upper Cook Inlet Commercial Fishing Announcement No. 18 opens set gillnet gear in the Kasilof Section of the Upper Subdistrict within 600 feet of the mean high tide mark on the Kenai Peninsula shoreline from 7:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, July 16, 2020. Set gillnet gear will also be opened within 600 feet of the mean high tide mark in that portion of the Kenai Section north of the latitude of the Blanchard Line (60° 27.10' N. lat.) and south of the latitude of the ADF&G regulatory marker (60° 30.49' N. lat.) located south of the Kenai River mouth; i.e., the North Kalifornsky Beach statistical area (244-32) from 7:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, July 16, 2020.

Under 5AAC 21.359 (e)(3)(F) open periods of the Upper Subdistrict are exempt from gear and time restrictions. For the July 16 fishing period, as per 5AAC 21.331 up to 4 set gillnets per permit may be used, each no greater than 35 fathoms in length, and 105 fathoms in aggregate length, and up to 45 meshes in depth. All set gillnets must be 600 feet apart (5 AAC 21.335), and they must be within 600 feet of the mean high tide mark as per this announcement.

By regulation, drift gillnets will be allowed in the Expanded Kenai and Expanded Kasilof sections of the Upper Subdistrict from 7:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, July 16, 2020.

All other set gillnet fisheries in Upper Cook Inlet will fish the regularly scheduled period from 7:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, July 16, 2020 with the exception of set gillnet gear in that portion of the Western Subdistrict of the Central District south of the latitude of Redoubt Point, which is open from 6:00 a.m. until 10:00 p.m. on Thursday, July 16, 2020.

As of July 14, the Kasilof River sockeye salmon run is 45% complete based on average run timing and projects a final escapement of more than 487,000 fish. The minimum biological escapement goal (BEG) for Kasilof River sockeye salmon of 140,000 has been achieved. The additional fishing time provided in this announcement is intended to harvest sockeye salmon returning to the Kasilof river while minimizing harvest of Kenai River king and sockeye salmon until the abundance of these stocks can be projected with more certainty.

5 AAC 21.359(e)(3)(C) Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan restricts the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery to no more than 24 hours per week, with a 36-hour continuous closure per week beginning between 7:00 p.m. Thursday and 7:00 a.m. Friday. However, 5 AAC 21.359(e)(3)(F) Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan identifies fishing periods limited to fishing within 600 feet of the mean high tide mark in the Upper Subdistrict are exempt from hour and gear limitations identified under (e)(3)(A)-(E).

COVID-19

Under Alaska's Health Mandates 10, 17, and 18, commercial fishing is an Essential Business and is part of Alaska's Essential Services and Critical Infrastructure. Commercial fishermen should ensure that all travel and other activities in support of commercial fishing operations follow protocols in Alaska COVID-19 Health Mandates. COVID-19 Health Mandates may be found here: <https://gov.alaska.gov/home/covid19-healthmandates/>