

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES
NEWS RELEASE



Cora Campbell, Commissioner
Jeff Regnart, Director



Contact: Pat Shields, Area Management Biologist; 43961 Kalifornsky Beach Rd, Suite B Phone: (907) 262-9368 Date Issued: June 26, 2014	Aaron Dupuis, Asst. Area Management Biologist Soldotna, AK 99669 Fax: (907) 262-4709 Time: 2:00 p.m.
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UPPER COOK INLET COMMERCIAL FISHING ANNOUNCEMENT No. 5
EMERGENCY ORDER NUMBER 2S-05-14

Upper Cook Inlet Commercial Fishing Announcement No. 5 modifies 5AAC 21.320(a)(2) *Weekly Fishing Periods* with set gillnets in the Upper Subdistrict of the Central District beginning 12:01 a.m. on July 1, 2014. Regularly scheduled fishing periods that occur from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Mondays and Thursdays provided for in 5 AAC 21.320(a)(2) are no longer in effect beginning 12:01 a.m. on July 1, 2014.

According to 5 AAC 21.359 *Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan*, from July 1–31, if the projected inriver run of late-run king salmon is less than 22,500 fish, in order to achieve the sustainable escapement goal (SEG) of 15,000 to 30,000 king salmon, and provide reasonable harvest opportunity, the commissioner may, by emergency order, establish fishing seasons as follows. In the Kenai River sport fishery, the use of bait may be prohibited. If the use of bait is prohibited in the Kenai River king salmon sport fishery, the commercial set gillnet fishery in the Upper Subdistrict will be limited to fishing no more than 36 hours per week, with a 36-hour continuous closure per week beginning between 7:00 p.m. Thursday and 7:00 a.m. Friday.

Since 2009, Kenai River king salmon and other king salmon stocks throughout Cook Inlet are experiencing a period of low productivity and below average run strength. That trend has continued during 2014. The 2014 forecast of late-run Kenai River king salmon is for a total run of approximately 19,700 fish. This is less than one-half of the 1986–2013 average total run of approximately 57,000 fish and is insufficient to provide for harvest in an unrestricted fishery without jeopardizing attainment of the SEG. Considering the small run forecast and direction provided in the management plan, the department has announced that the king salmon sport fishery in the Kenai River will be prosecuted beginning July 1 with no bait. Therefore, as a result of the forecast for an inriver run of less than 22,500 king salmon and the sport fishery restricted to no bait, the set gillnet fishery in the Upper Subdistrict is limited to fishing no more than 36-hours per week beginning July 1, 2014, with a weekly 36-hour closure as described above. With regularly

scheduled periods on Mondays and Thursdays no longer in effect, any and all fishing time provided to set gillnets in the Upper Subdistrict may occur only via Emergency Order beginning July 1, 2014.