

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: August 5, 2014	Aaron Dupuis, Asst. Area Management Biologist Soldotna, AK 99669 Fax: (907) 262-4709 Time: 4:30 p.m.
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UPPER COOK INLET COMMERCIAL FISHING ANNOUNCEMENT No. 50
EMERGENCY ORDER NUMBER 2S-50-14

Upper Cook Inlet Commercial Fishing Announcement No. 50 opens commercial fishing with set gillnets in the Kenai and East Foreland sections of the Upper Subdistrict on Wednesday, August 6, 2014, from 8:00 am until 8:00 p.m. The Kasilof Section set gillnet fishery will be closed during this fishing period. Unless opened by subsequent emergency order, the entire Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery will close for the 2014 season at 8:00 p.m. on Wednesday, August 6, 2014.

5 AAC 21.359 *Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan* states that from August 1 through August 15, if the projected escapement of king salmon into the Kenai River is at least 16,500 fish, but less than 22,500 fish, notwithstanding the provisions of 5 AAC 21.360(c)(1)(B), (2)(B), and (3)(B), the commissioner may open, by emergency order, the commercial set gillnet fishery in the Upper Subdistrict to no more than 36 hours of fishing time. So far, 24 hours of fishing time has been authorized in the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery in August of 2014. With the 12 hours this announcement authorizes, all 36 hours of fishing time available to the Kenai and East Foreland sections set gillnet fishery will have been utilized.

According to 5 AAC 21.310 *Fishing Seasons*, the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery will close August 15, unless closed earlier by emergency order after July 31, if the department determines that less than one percent of the season's total sockeye harvest has been taken per fishing period for two consecutive fishing periods in the combined Kenai and East Forelands Sections or separately in the Kasilof Section. Based on reported harvest from the August 2 and August 4 fishing periods, the Kasilof Section set gillnet fishery caught less than one percent of their total sockeye salmon harvest for both fishing periods. Therefore, the Kasilof Section set gillnet fishery will be closed during the August 6 fishing period provided in this announcement. The harvest in the Kenai and East Foreland sections set gillnet fishery was greater than one-percent of their season total sockeye salmon harvest on both the August 2 and August 4 fishery.

The current estimated cumulative passage of king salmon into the Kenai River is 15,489 fish through August 4. Based on the current passage, the projected 2014 king salmon escapement will be approximately 17,500 fish.

The biological escapement goal (BEG) for Kasilof River sockeye salmon is 160,000–340,000 fish, while the optimal escapement goal (OEG) is 160,000–390,000 fish. More than 432,000 sockeye salmon are estimated to have passed the Kasilof sonar through August 4. This level of passage is in excess of the upper end of the BEG and OEG.

The Kenai River inriver (sonar) goal is 1,000,000 to 1,200,000 sockeye salmon for the expected run size of 2.3 million to 4.6 million fish. Through August 4, the estimated cumulative sockeye salmon passage in the Kenai River is nearly 1.1 million fish.

Therefore, based upon king salmon passage estimates into the Kenai River and sockeye salmon passage estimates into both the Kenai and Kasilof rivers, opening the set gillnet fishery in the Upper Subdistrict is warranted.