

SPORT FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 1-KS-F-22-12

Issued at: Haines, Thursday, July 12, 2012

Effective 12:01 A.M.
Date: Monday, July 16, 2012

Expiration Date: 11:59 P.M. Sunday, July 31, 2012, unless superseded by subsequent emergency order.

EXPLANATION: This emergency order extends the area closed to king salmon sport fishing in Chilkat Inlet north of a line extending from an ADF&G regulatory marker approximately one mile south of Anchorage Point to an ADF&G regulatory marker directly north of the Letnikof Cove boat ramp from July 16 to July 31, and decreases the bag and possession limit in the remainder of Chilkat Inlet north of Seduction Point to 1 king salmon, 28 inches or greater in length, to allow king salmon to enter the Chilkat River for escapement needs as prescribed in the Lynn Canal and Chilkat River King Salmon Fishery Management Plan.

REGULATION: The provisions of 5 AAC 47.021. Special provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the salt waters of Southeast Alaska Area (c) are superseded by this emergency order. Under this emergency order, the following provisions are effective from 12:01 a.m. July 16, 2012 through 11:59 p.m., July 31, 2012:

5 AAC 47.021. Special provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the salt waters of Southeast Alaska Area.

(c) In the Haines/Skagway vicinity:

- (1) The waters of Chilkat Inlet north of a line extending from an ADF&G regulatory marker approximately one mile south of Anchorage Point to an ADF&G regulatory marker directly north of the Letnikof Cove boat ramp are closed to king salmon fishing;
- (2) In the remainder of Chilkat Inlet north of Seduction Point the bag and possession limit is one king salmon , 28 inches or greater in length;

Cora Campbell
Commissioner

By delegation to:

Richard Chapell
Haines/Skagway Area
Management Biologist

JUSTIFICATION: The Lynn Canal and Chilkat River King Salmon Fishery Management Plan (5 AAC 33.384.) directs the department to manage fisheries based upon the inriver stock assessment program to achieve an inriver run of 1,850-3,600 large (three ocean age and older) king salmon. If the projected inriver run is less than 1,850 three ocean age and older fish, the plan directs the department to close sport fishing for king salmon in the waters of Chilkat Inlet north of a line extending from an ADF&G regulatory marker approximately one mile south of Anchorage Point to an ADF&G regulatory marker directly north of the Letnikof Cove boat ramp and in the remaining water of Chilkat Inlet north of Seduction Point through July 15. In that scenario, the plan also directs the department to establish a sport bag and possession limit of one king salmon, 28 inches or greater in length in Chilkat Inlet.

Based on inriver stock assessment program data through July 11, and using average run timing, the Chilkat River king salmon inriver run projection is 1,350 large fish. However, the king salmon run timing appears to be at least 1 week late. Using a late run timing scenario, the inriver run is still projected to be less than 1,850 three ocean age and older fish. Therefore the reduced bag and possession limit is warranted.

The closure in the northern portion of Chilkat Inlet is being extended to July 31 to reduce the harvest of Chilkat River king salmon. This closure is in addition to provisions in the plan. King salmon returning to the Chilkat River hold in salt water in the northern portion of Chilkat Inlet near the Chilkat River mouth, making them vulnerable to anglers. Given the late run timing in combination with the low inriver run projection, extending the closure of this area to king salmon fishing through July 31 is needed to conserve sufficient numbers of king salmon to achieve the inriver run goal.

The Department closes a sport fishery for a certain species instead of prohibiting the retention of that species when terminal gear used and/or fishing techniques for that species are not similar to that used for other species present that have no conservation issues to ensure the restriction is enforceable. Since the gear and techniques used for king salmon are not similar to that used for other species present in Chilkat Inlet for which there are no conservation issues, a closure to fishing for king salmon is enforceable. Therefore the department is closing the sport fishery in this area for king salmon.

DISTRIBUTION: The distribution list for this emergency order is on file at the Region 1 Office of Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish, P. O. Box 110024, Douglas, AK 99824, (907) 465-4270 and at the Haines/Skagway Area Office, P.O. Box 330, Haines, AK 99827, (907) 766-2625.