

SPORT FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-1-43-12

Issued at Soldotna: Tuesday, July 17, 2012

Effective Date: 12:01 a.m., Thursday, July 19, 2012

Expiration Date: 11:59 p.m., Tuesday, July 31, 2012, unless superseded by subsequent emergency order.

EXPLANATION:

This emergency order supersedes Emergency Order No. 2-KS-1-38-12, issued Sunday, July 8, 2012. This emergency order closes the Kasilof River to sport fishing for king salmon beginning 12:01 a.m., Thursday, July 19, 2012, through 11:59 p.m., Tuesday, July 31, 2012. This closure prohibits all sport fishing for king salmon, including catch-and-release fishing. King salmon may not be retained or possessed; king salmon caught while fishing for other species may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately.

REGULATION:

The provisions of 5 AAC 56.122. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area. (8)(A) and (8)(B)(i) are superseded by this emergency order. Under this emergency order, the following provisions are effective beginning at 12:01 a.m., Thursday, July 19, 2012 through 11:59 p.m., Tuesday, July 31, 2012.

5 AAC 56.122. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area.

- (8) Kasilof River drainage, excluding Crooked Creek and Tustumena Lake and its tributaries:
- (A) is closed to sport fishing for king salmon; king salmon may not be retained or possessed; king salmon may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately
 - (8)(B) the following special provisions apply in that portion downstream of the Sterling Highway Bridge:
 - (i) is closed to sport fishing for king salmon; king salmon may not be retained or possessed; king salmon may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately;

Cora Campbell,
Commissioner

By delegation to:

Robert N. Begich
Area Management Biologist

JUSTIFICATION:

King salmon runs to Cook Inlet, including early-run Kasilof River king salmon, and throughout Alaska, are experiencing a period of low productivity and low run strength. The department's information,

including data from inriver assessment programs, indicates that the Kenai River late run is also experiencing low strength. The department has no inseason stock assessment data for late-run Kasilof River king salmon. However, based on the similarities in the low run strength of early-run king salmon stocks to both the Kasilof and Kenai rivers in 2012, it is likely the Kasilof late-run of king salmon is also experiencing a well below average run. The department has determined that an emergency order to close the late-run king salmon sport fishery in the Kenai River drainage will likely result in an increase in the sport fishing effort and catch of king salmon in the Kasilof River during July. Therefore, to minimize the effects of conservation actions for the Kenai River on the Kasilof River, a closure is warranted to ensure adequate escapement of Kasilof River late-run king salmon.

PREVIOUS EMERGENCY ORDERS AFFECTED:

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-1-38-12, which prohibited the retention of king salmon in the Kasilof River is superseded.

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-1-19-12, which prohibited the use of bait while sport fishing in the Kasilof River downstream of the Sterling Highway Bridge, remains in effect.

DISTRIBUTION:

The distribution list for this emergency order is on file at the Region 2 Office of Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish, 333 Raspberry Road, Anchorage, AK 99518, (907) 267-2218.