

SPORT FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-1-35-15

Issued at Soldotna: Thursday, June 25, 2015

Effective Date: 12:01 a.m., Wednesday, July 1, 2015

Expiration Date: 11:59 p.m., Friday, July 31, 2015, unless superseded by subsequent emergency order.

EXPLANATION:

This emergency order prohibits the use of bait while sport fishing in the Kenai River from its mouth upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located at the outlet of Skilak Lake beginning at 12:01 a.m., Wednesday, July 1 through 11:59 p.m., Friday, July 31, 2015.

REGULATION:

The provisions of 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area. (1)(B) are superseded by this emergency order. Under this emergency order, the following provisions are effective beginning at 12:01 a.m., Wednesday, July 1 through 11:59 p.m., Friday, July 31, 2015:

5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area.

(1) sport fishing gear restrictions:

(B) from July 1 – July 31, in the Kenai River from an ADF&G regulatory marker located at its mouth upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located at the outlet of Skilak Lake, only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used.

Sam Cotten,
Commissioner

By delegation to:

Robert N. Begich
Area Management Biologist

JUSTIFICATION:

The purpose of 5 AAC 21.359 *Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan* (a), is to ensure adequate escapement of late-run king salmon into the Kenai River. The sustainable escapement goal (SEG) for late-run Kenai River king salmon is 15,000 to 30,000 king salmon. As provided in 5 AAC 21.359 *Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan* (e) from July 1 through July 31, if the projected inriver run of late-run king salmon is less than 22,500 the Kenai River sport fishery may be restricted in order to achieve the sustainable escapement goal.

Kenai River king salmon and other king salmon stocks are in a period of low productivity and have been below average run strength since 2009. That trend has continued during 2015. The 2015 pre-season forecast for late-run Kenai River king salmon is for a total run of approximately 22,000 fish. This is less than one-half

of the 1986–2014 average total run of approximately 57,000 fish and is insufficient to provide harvest in an unrestricted fishery without jeopardizing attainment of the SEG. Considering the small run forecast and direction provided in the management plan, prohibiting bait in the sport fishery is warranted.

PREVIOUS EMERGENCY ORDERS AFFECTED:

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-1-05-15, issued Thursday, February 19, 2015 which closed a portion of the Kenai River Drainage to sport fishing for king salmon through July 31, 2015, 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.