

SPORT FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-1-37-15

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Expiration Date: 11:59 p.m., Friday, July 31, 2015, unless superseded by subsequent emergency order.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 and multiple hooks while sport fishing in waters of the Kasilof River downstream of the Sterling Highway Bridge beginning 12:01 a.m., Wednesday, July 1 through 11:59 p.m., Friday, July 31, 2015. In the waters described above, only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used.

REGULATION:

The provisions of 5 AAC 56.122. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area. (8)(B)(ii) are superseded by this emergency order.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 56.122. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, annual, 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:

(B) the following special provisions apply in that portion downstream of the Sterling Highway Bridge:

(ii) in flowing waters, from July 1 – July 31, only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used;

Sam Cotten
Commissioner

By delegation to:

Robert N. Begich
Area Management Biologist

JUSTIFICATION:

Kenai River king salmon stocks are experiencing a period of low productivity and below average run strength since 2009. That trend has continued during 2015. Emergency Order No. 2-KS-1-06-15, issued Thursday, February 19, 2015, for the Kasilof River, prohibited the use of bait and multiple hooks, prohibited the retention of naturally-produced king salmon and reduced the bag limit for hatchery-produced king salmon. That emergency order was issued to conserve early run Crooked Creek king salmon and expires July 1. The department manages the Kasilof River early-run king salmon sport fishery to achieve a sustainable escapement goal of 650 to 1,700 naturally-produced king salmon as monitored through a weir at the department facility located on Crooked Creek. As of June 24, the escapement was 289 naturally-produced king salmon and it is uncertain if the sustainable escapement

goal will be achieved and/or broodstock will be available for egg takes in 2015. Early-run Crooked Creek origin king salmon are still present in the Kasilof River during early July. The department's information, including data from inriver assessment programs as well as king salmon catch data from the Cook Inlet Central District Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery, indicates king salmon abundance is low in general.

Emergency orders (2-KS-1-05-15 and 2-KS-1-35-15) were issued to restrict the king salmon sport fishery in the Kenai River drainage during July. These emergency orders 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, the measures in the emergency order are warranted to ensure adequate escapement of naturally-produced Crooked Creek early-run and Kasilof River late-run king salmon.

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.