

SPORT FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-7-04-15

Issued at: Homer, Thursday, February 19, 2015

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

Expiration Date: 11:59 p.m.,
Wednesday, July 15, 2015, unless
superseded by subsequent emergency
order.

EXPLANATION: This emergency order extends the date by two weeks of the closed saltwater area surrounding the Anchor River mouth and the special harvest areas north to 59° 52.98' N. located approximately one mile south of Stariski Creek and south to Bluff Point (59° 40.00' N. lat.). This emergency order is effective from 12:01 a.m., Wednesday, July 1, 2015 through 11:59 p.m., Wednesday, July 15, 2015.

REGULATION: The provisions of 5 AAC 58.055. Upper Cook Inlet Salt Water Early-run King Salmon Management Plan. (b), (c), (d)(3), and (e) are superseded by this emergency order. Under this emergency order the following provisions are effective, beginning 12:01 a.m., Wednesday, July 1 2015, through 11:59 p.m., Wednesday, July 15, 2015:

5 AAC 58.055. Upper Cook Inlet Salt Water Early-run King Salmon Management Plan.

(b) The Early Run King Salmon Special Harvest Area consists of all salt waters north of the latitude of Bluff Point (59° 40.00' N. lat.) to the latitude of an ADF&G marker located one mile south of Stariski Creek (59° 52.98' N. lat.) and within one mile of shore.

(c) From July 1 through July 15, within the waters described in (b), a person who is a sport fishing guide may not sport fish while a client is present or is within the guide's control or responsibility.

(d) The following waters, within one mile of shore, are closed to all sport fishing from July 1 through July 15.

(3) from the latitude of an ADF&G regulatory marker located two miles north of the Anchor River at 59° 48.92' N. lat. to the latitude of the Anchor Point Light at 59° 46.14' N. lat.

(e) Within the waters described in (b), from July 1 through July 15, a person may not, after taking a king salmon 20 inches or greater in length, fish for any species of fish on that same day.

Sam Cotten
Commissioner

By delegation to:

Carol Kerkvliet
Fisheries Biologist II

JUSTIFICATION:

The sustainable escapement goal (SEG) for Anchor River king salmon is 3,800–10,000 fish. In 2014, the SEG was not achieved despite restricting the inriver and marine sport fisheries preseason and inseason. In 2012 and 2013, the SEG was achieved using a combination of inriver and marine preseason and inseason restrictions. From 2009–2011, the SEG was not achieved when only inseason restrictions were used to reduce the inriver and marine sport harvest of king salmon. The 2015 Anchor River king salmon run is expected to be below the historical average and may be similar to the 2014 run when escapement was the lowest since 2003.

King salmon originating from the Anchor River have a higher probability of being harvested in the saltwaters areas near the Anchor River through July 15. Therefore extending the dates of the closed area surrounding the mouth and restrictions associated with the adjacent Special Harvest Areas are justified to reduce the harvest of Anchor River bound king salmon during this period.

The recent poor king salmon runs in Lower Cook Inlet streams and the uncertainty for how quickly the runs may rebound, justify starting the 2015 season more conservatively than in 2014. It is anticipated the suite of inriver and marine restrictions will provide the greatest potential for achieving escapement and egg-take goals and minimizing shifting effort due to conservation actions on the Anchor and Ninilchik rivers while providing some fishing opportunity.

Increased harvest opportunity may be allowed by subsequent emergency order if inseason assessment indicates the runs are stronger than anticipated and sufficiently strong enough to achieve goals.

PREVIOUS EMERGENCY ORDERS AFFECTED:

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-7-01-15 closes the first and fifth opening weekend and the five Wednesday openings in May and June for the Anchor River drainage and decreases the waters of the Anchor River drainage open to sport fishing to the downstream side of the Old Sterling Highway Bridge approximately 550 feet below the junction of the North and South forks. This emergency order is effective from 12:01 a.m., Friday, May 1, 2015, through 11:59 p.m., Tuesday, June 30, 2015.

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-7-02-15 limits sport fishing gear to only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure when fishing in the Anchor River, Deep Creek, or Ninilchik River drainages beginning 12:01 a.m., Wednesday, April 1, 2015, through 11:59 p.m., Tuesday, June 30, 2015.

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-7-03-15 establishes a combined annual limit of two king salmon 20 inches or greater in length for fish harvested in the Anchor River, Deep Creek, and Ninilchik River and all marine waters south of the latitude of the mouth of the Ninilchik River (60° 03.99' N. lat.) to the latitude of Bluff Point (59° 40.00' N. lat.). This emergency order remains in effect from 12:01 a.m., Wednesday, April 1, 2015 through 11:59 p.m., Wednesday, July 15, 2015.

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.