

SPORT FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 2-SS-2-37-16

Issued at: Palmer, Thursday, August 4, 2016

Effective Date: 12:01 a.m. Saturday, August 6, 2016

Expiration Date: 11:59 p.m. Friday, September 30, 2016, unless superseded by subsequent emergency order.

EXPLANATION:

This emergency order prohibits the use of bait on the Little Susitna River. Only unbaited, artificial lures may be used. The area affected by this emergency order includes all waters of the Little Susitna River from its confluence with Cook Inlet upstream to the Parks Highway.

REGULATION:

The provisions of 5 AAC 60.122. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Knik Arm Drainages Area. (9)(B) are superseded by this emergency order. Under this emergency order, the following provisions are effective, beginning 12:01 a.m. Saturday, August 6 through 11:59 p.m. Friday, September 30, 2016:

5 AAC 60.122. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Knik Arm Drainages Area.

(9) in the Little Susitna River drainage,

(B) in the flowing waters from its mouth upstream to the Parks Highway, only unbaited, artificial lures may be used;

Sam Cotten
Commissioner

By delegation to:

Sam Ivey
Area Management Biologist

JUSTIFICATION:

The Little Susitna River coho salmon sustainable escapement goal (SEG) is 10,100–17,700 fish. Recent daily weir counts are well below average with escapement projections continuing to drop. Sport harvest can exceed escapement on average to below-average run years due to the high effort in this fishery. By August 6, as much as 50 percent of the harvest has typically taken place in the sport fishery. As of August 3, only 1,929 coho salmon had passed upstream of the weir. It is anticipated that the use of bait, if allowed to occur per regulation beginning August 6, will increase harvest by as much as 2,000 fish and drop escapement below the SEG under the current projection scenario. Given the variability in coho salmon run timing, current run strength, and decreasing escapement projections, it is justified to manage conservatively and delay the use of bait in the Little Susitna at this time.

DISTRIBUTION:

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