

SPORT FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-1-20-16

Issued at: Soldotna, Thursday, June 16, 2016

Effective Date: 12:01 a.m., Saturday, June 18, 2016

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June 30, 2016, unless superseded by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

EXPLANATION:

This emergency order rescinds Emergency Order No. 2-KS-1-04-16 issued on February 18, 2016, which prohibited the retention of naturally-produced king salmon except Tuesdays and Saturdays, and limited sport fishing gear to one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure while sport fishing in the Kasilof River.

REGULATION:

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-1-04-16 is rescinded.

Sam Cotten,
Commissioner

By delegation to:

Robert N. Begich
Area Management Biologist

JUSTIFICATION:

As provided by 5 AAC 57.160 *Kenai River and Kasilof River Early-Run King Salmon Management Plan* (c), the department shall manage the Kasilof River early-run king salmon sport and guided sport fisheries to achieve the sustainable escapement goal (SEG), to provide reasonable harvest opportunities over the entire run while ensuring adequate escapement of naturally-produced king salmon, and to minimize the effects of conservation actions for the Kenai River on the Kasilof River.

Preseason emergency orders have been issued during 2013 through 2016 to conserve early-run Kenai and Kasilof river king salmon stocks that have been experiencing a period of low productivity and below average run strength. Monitoring the king salmon runs at Crooked Creek, a Kasilof River tributary under these restrictions from 2013 through 2015 indicates the production of both naturally-and hatchery-produced king salmon has improved and may be progressing to average levels.

The emergency order to restrict the early-run king salmon sport fishery in the Kasilof River during 2016 was in part, a continuation of an incremental approach to maintain harvest opportunity while assuring the SEG of naturally-produced king salmon and stocking goals can be achieved as king salmon production may be progressing from low to average levels. The department's 2016 inseason information, including data from inriver assessment programs as well as king salmon catch data from the department's guide logbook program, indicates early-run king salmon abundance in general is much improved over recent years. Based on inseason information and an approximate 50% increase in the stocking level of early-run hatchery-produced king salmon at Crooked Creek in recent years the department has determined that the Kasilof River king salmon sport fishery can be restored to existing regulations for the remainder of June.

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-1-19-16 was issued to allow harvest of king salmon in a small area of the Kenai River sport fishery during the remainder of June. Therefore, it is no longer necessary to minimize the effects of conservation actions for the Kenai River on the Kasilof River.

PREVIOUS EMERGENCY ORDERS AFFECTED:

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-1-04-16, which prohibited the retention of naturally-produced king salmon on Thursdays and prohibited the use of bait and multiple hooks in the Kasilof River downstream of the Sterling Highway Bridge from Sunday, May 1 through Thursday, June 30, 2016 is rescinded to restore the retention of naturally-produced king salmon on Thursdays and allow the use of bait and multiple hooks.

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.