

SPORT FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 2-SS-2-38-17

Issued at: Palmer, Wednesday, August 23, 2017

Effective Date: 5:00 a.m. Saturday, August 26, 2017

Expiration Date: 11:59 p.m. Sunday,
December 31, 2017, unless superseded by
subsequent emergency order.

EXPLANATION:

This emergency order increases the bag and possession limit for salmon, other than king salmon, 16 inches or greater in length to four per day and in possession, of which, all four may be coho salmon for the waters of Cottonwood Creek and Wasilla Creek open to fishing for salmon. In addition, this emergency order extends the two-day weekend fisheries of Cottonwood and Wasilla creeks to three days to take place each Saturday through Monday. Wasilla and Cottonwood creeks remain open to fishing only from 5:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. each day. Other Knik Arm waters, including the Little Susitna River, Jim Creek, Fish Creek, and the Eklutna Tailrace, remain unaffected by this emergency order.

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. (4)(A) and (11)(D) are superseded by this emergency order. Under this emergency order, the following provisions are effective beginning 5:00 a.m. Saturday, August 26, 2017, through 11:59 p.m. Sunday, December 31, 2017:

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.

(4) in the Cottonwood Creek drainage,

(A) from August 26 - December 31, from its mouth upstream to an ADF&G marker located one mile upstream from the Palmer Hayflat State Game Refuge access road, sport fishing is allowed only on Saturdays, Sundays, and Mondays from 5:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.; bag and possession limit for salmon, other than king salmon, 16 inches or greater in length is four fish, of which all four may be coho salmon;

(11) the Wasilla Creek drainage, including Rabbit Slough,

(D) from August 26 - December 31, downstream of the Alaska Railroad Bridge is open to sport fishing for salmon, except king salmon, on Saturdays, Sundays, and Mondays from 5:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.; bag and possession limit for salmon, other than king salmon, 16 inches or greater in length is four fish, of which all four may be coho salmon; a person who takes the bag limit of salmon from Wasilla Creek may not sport fish for any species of fish that same day in waters open to sport fishing for salmon;

Sam Cotten,
Commissioner

By delegation to:

Samantha Oslund,
Assistant Area Management Biologist

JUSTIFICATION:

The sustainable escapement goal (SEG) for coho salmon in Fish Creek is 1,200-4,400 fish. As of August 22, 2017, weir counts indicate about 4,720 coho salmon have passed the weir and the SEG has been exceeded. Based upon previous studies, there is a correlation in run size between runs to Fish Creek and runs to other Knik Arm streams, specifically Cottonwood and Wasilla creeks. A recent staff survey of lower Wasilla Creek indicates an above average run for that system is likely to occur as predicted by the correlation. Therefore, it is warranted to increase the bag and possession limit for coho salmon and open additional days of fishing for these weekend-only fisheries. It is not anticipated that the increased sport harvest from this emergency order will lower the escapement below desired escapement levels in Cottonwood and Wasilla creeks.

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.