

SPORT FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-1-14-17

Issued at: Soldotna, Monday, June 12, 2017

Effective Date: 12:01 a.m., Tuesday, June 13, 2017

Expiration Date: 11:59 p.m., Friday,
June 30, 2017, unless superseded by
subsequent emergency order.

EXPLANATION:

This emergency order increases the maximum size limit for king salmon in the waters below the ADF&G marker at Slikok Creek on the Kenai River from a maximum size of less than 36 inches total length, to a maximum size of less than 46 inches total length. The maximum size of king salmon harvest above the Slikok creek markers remains limited to fish less than 36 inches total length.

REGULATION:

Consistent with the provisions of 5 AAC 57.160, Kenai River and Kasilof River Early-run King Salmon Management Plan, the provisions of 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area. (a)(2)(A)(i) are superseded by this emergency order. Under this emergency order, the following provisions are effective beginning at 12:01 a.m. Tuesday, June 13 through 11:59 p.m. Friday, June 30, 2017.

5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area.

(a)(2) king salmon 20 inches or greater in length, as follows:

(A) may be taken only from January 1 – July 31, in the Kenai River from its mouth upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located at the outlet of Skilak Lake, with a bag and possession limit of one fish, as follows:

(i) from June 13 - June 30, from its mouth upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 300 yards downstream from the mouth of Slikok Creek only king salmon less than 46 inches in length as measured from tip of snout to tip of tail may be kept, and from an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 300 yards downstream from the mouth of Slikok Creek upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located at the outlet of Skilak Lake, only king salmon that less than 36 inches in length as measured from tip of snout to tip of tail,

Sam Cotten,
Commissioner

By delegation to:

Brian Marston
Area Management Biologist

JUSTIFICATION:

The Kenai River early run king salmon run is managed to achieve an OEG of 3,900 to 6,600 large king salmon. As of June 11, 2017, 4,010 large king salmon have been counted through the sonar site at river mile 14. Normal run timing predicts that 51% of the run will have passed the river mile 14 site by this date. The department currently projects that the inriver run of large king salmon will be 7,869 fish. Additionally, allowing for projected sport harvest and potential catch-and-release mortality above the sonar site, the escapement projection for early-run large king salmon is 7,659 fish, well above the OEG. Abundance indices from the ADF&G sport harvest creel and size distribution netting projects, are also above average. Recent runs over the past 4 years on the Kenai River have not included average numbers of age 7 king salmon. The majority of king salmon on the Kenai River of age 7 are over 46 inches total length. As such in order to help achieve the OEG, and also rebuild the abundance of older and larger fish, the department has increased the maximum size limit to less than 46 inches in waters below the markers at Slikok Creek. This size limit change protects the majority of age 7 fish, while increasing harvest potential to help achieve the OEG. As per 5 AAC 57.160, *Kenai River and Kasilof River Early-run King Salmon Management Plan* the harvest of king salmon above the Slikok Creek markers shall remain limited to fish less than 36 inches.

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.