

# SUBSISTENCE FISHING

## *Emergency Order*

ALASKA DEPARTMENT  
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-2-24-18

Issued at: Palmer, Wednesday, June 20, 2018

Effective Date: 4:00 a.m. Monday, June 25, 2018

Expiration Date: 11:59 p.m. Saturday, June 30, 2018,  
unless superseded by subsequent emergency order.

### **EXPLANATION:**

This emergency order closes the Upper Yentna River subsistence fishery during the king salmon season.

### **REGULATION:**

The provisions of 5 AAC 01.593 (2) are superseded by this emergency order. Under this emergency order, the following provisions are effective, beginning 4:00 a.m. Monday, June 25 through 11:59 p.m. Saturday, June 30, 2018:

#### **5 AAC 001.593. Upper Yentna River subsistence salmon fishery.**

In the Yentna River drainage outside the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area described in 5AAC 99.015(a)(3), salmon may be taken for subsistence purposes only as follows:

(2) in the mainstem of the Yentna River from its confluence with Martin Creek upstream to its confluence with the Skwentna River from July 15 through August 7;

Sam Cotten,  
Commissioner

By delegation to:

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Tom Taube,  
Deputy Director, Division of Sport Fish

### **JUSTIFICATION:**

An emergency order issued prior to the season closed sport fisheries in Units 2, 3, 5, and 6 of the Susitna River (Parks Highway streams) and restricted the Deshka River and Unit 4 of the Susitna River (Yentna drainage) to nonretention in anticipation of run similar in size as 2017. The low forecast was driven by a predicted low return of 5-year old king salmon and uncertainty in the forecast of 4-year old fish. 5-year old fish typically constitute about half a given year's run. To date, sizes of fish observed in ADF&G fishwheels on the lower Susitna River, the Deshka River weir, and reports from anglers suggest low abundance of age five fish. Other areas of Cook Inlet and the state are experiencing low returns of older age classes leading to

widespread closures of Cook Inlet king salmon sport fisheries. In addition, all indices of abundance indicate king salmon run strength in the Susitna drainage to be lower than anticipated at the outset of the season.

The sustainable escapement goal (SEG) for king salmon in the Deshka River is 13,000 to 28,000 fish, as measured at the weir located at river mile 7. Based upon average run timing, approximately 50 percent of the escapement should have passed the weir by June 18, 2018. At this time, only 3,983 fish have passed the weir and the total escapement is projected to be approximately 7,472 fish. ADF&G monitors escapement by post season aerial count of spawners on three streams within the Yentna River drainage that have SEGs: Peters Creek, Lake Creek, and Talachulitna River. All three SEGs were missed in 2017. The count on the Talachulitna River, which occurs upstream of the subsistence fishery, was only half the low end of the SEG range in 2017. Any additional mortality associated with continued catch-and-release fishing cannot be justified; therefore, ADF&G issued an emergency order to close the sport fisheries in the Susitna and Yentna river drainages. All fish within the Yentna drainage must be conserved to provide the greatest potential for achieving escapement goals in 2018; therefore, it is warranted to now also close the last three days of the Yentna River subsistence king salmon fishery.

**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.