

# SPORT FISHING

## *Emergency Order*

ALASKA DEPARTMENT  
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-2-15-18

Issued at: Palmer, Wednesday, June 13, 2018

Effective Date: 6:00 a.m. Friday, June 15, 2018

Expiration Date: 11:59 p.m. Friday, July 13, 2018,  
unless superseded by subsequent emergency order.

### EXPLANATION:

This emergency order prohibits the retention of king salmon in the Little Susitna River and limits sport fishing gear to one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure.

### 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 (9)(A) and (B) are superseded by this emergency order. Under this emergency order, the following provisions are effective 6:00 a.m. Friday, June 15 through 11:59 p.m. Friday, July 13, 2018:

### **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,

(A) from June 15 – July 13, in flowing waters from its mouth upstream to the Parks Highway, sport fishing is open for king salmon; king salmon may not be retained or possessed; king salmon caught must be released immediately; a person may not remove a king salmon from the water before releasing the fish;

(B) from June 15 – July 13, in flowing waters from its mouth upstream to the Parks Highway, only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used;

Sam Cotten  
Commissioner

By delegation to:

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Sam Ivey  
Area Management Biologist

JUSTIFICATION:

The sustainable escapement goal for the Little Susitna River is 2,100–4,300 king salmon based on counts taken at a weir located at approximately river mile 32.5 and four miles upstream of the Little Susitna Public Use Facility (LSPUF). To date, only 70 king salmon have passed the Little Susitna weir and the projected escapement is 532. An exit survey conducted by the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation at the LSPUF indicates below average harvest for this date. Recent high water may be contributing to below average fishing success and the possibility of uncounted fish swimming over submerged weir panels. However, video monitoring allows the ability to enumerate fish 24 hours per day and low daily video counts indicate low abundance of king salmon in the river. Further, reports from anglers and staff at the weir suggest a low abundance of age five fish, which typically make up about half of the run on any given year. A poor return of this age class is also being experienced on the Susitna River drainage and in other areas of the state, increasing the likelihood the goal may not be achieved without further restrictions in the sport fishery. Therefore, it is prudent to further restrict harvest until the run can be more fully assessed and determine if the sustainable escapement goal will be achieved. The department will continue to assess the run and take additional action if necessary.

PREVIOUS EMERGENCY ORDERS AFFECTED:

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-2-09-18 which restricted gear to one unbaited, single hook, artificial lure, established an annual limit of two king salmon 20 inches or greater in length, and prohibited retention of king salmon Tuesdays through Thursdays on the Little Susitna River is superseded by this emergency order.

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.