

SPORT FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No.: 3-KS-W-02-18

Issued at: Fairbanks, Monday, April 30,
2018

Effective Date: 12:01 a.m. Monday, May 14, 2018

Expiration Date: 11:59 p.m. Wednesday, August
15, 2018, unless superseded by subsequent
emergency order.

EXPLANATION:

This emergency order prohibits sport fishing for king salmon in all fresh waters from Bald Head to Point Romanof. This closure includes, but is not limited to, the Unalakleet, Shaktoolik, Koyuk, Ungalik, Inglutalik, and Golsovia river drainages. In addition, only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used in these drainages.

All king salmon caught incidentally, in the waters described above, while fishing for other species may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately.

REGULATION:

The provisions of 5 AAC 70.011. Seasons and bag, possession, annual, and size limits for the Northwestern Area (c)(10) and 5 AAC 70.030. Methods, means, and general provisions – Finfish (f) are added by this emergency order. Under this emergency order, the following provisions are effective 12:01 a.m. Monday, May 14, 2018:

5 AAC 70.011. Seasons and bag, possession, annual, and size limits for the Northwestern Area.

(c)(10) In all fresh waters from Bald Head to Point Romanof, sport fishing for king salmon is closed. King salmon incidentally caught while fishing for other species may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately.

5 AAC 70.030. Methods, means, and general provisions – Finfish.

(f) In all fresh waters from Bald Head to Point Romanof, the use of bait is prohibited.

Sam Cotten
Commissioner

By delegation to:



Brendan Scanlon
Northwest and North Slope Area Biologist

JUSTIFICATION:

The 2018 preseason outlook for the Unalakleet River drainage king salmon run is expected to be insufficient to provide for a moderate harvestable surplus. According to the *Subdistricts 5 and 6 of the Norton Sound District and the Unalakleet River King Salmon Management Plan*, when the inriver subsistence fishery is closed to the retention of king salmon, sport fishing for king salmon will be closed. At this time, restrictions are planned to close the Unalakleet River subsistence fishery for king salmon effective May 14, 2018.

The department does not have reliable inseason stock assessment information for the Shaktoolik, Koyuk, Ungalik, Inglutalik, and Golsovia river drainages, but these king salmon runs generally cycle in accordance with Unalakleet River stocks. The closure of sport fishing for king salmon in these rivers will provide protection for returning fish. The prohibition of bait while sport fishing should minimize catch-and-release mortality for king salmon incidentally caught while sport fishing for other species.

The department will continue to evaluate inseason run strength and take appropriate management actions to ensure that escapement requirements are met. If inseason stock assessment information indicates that the king salmon escapement goal in the Unalakleet River will be met, restrictions will be relaxed.

DISTRIBUTION:

The distribution list for this emergency order is on file at the Region III Office of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish, 1300 College Road, Fairbanks, AK 99701, (907) 459-7207.