

# SPORT FISHING

## *Emergency Order*

ALASKA DEPARTMENT  
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-1-09-19

Issued at: Soldotna, Thursday, February 14, 2019

Effective Date: 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, May 1, 2019

Expiration Date: 11:59 p.m. Wednesday, July 31, 2019, unless superseded by subsequent emergency order.

### **EXPLANATION:**

This emergency order prohibits the retention of king salmon of all sizes in the Kenai River from the mouth upstream to the outlet of Skilak Lake from May 1 through June 30, 2019. Retention of king salmon will remain prohibited July 1 through July 31, 2019, in waters of the Kenai River drainage from an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 300 yards downstream from the mouth of Slikok Creek, upstream to the outlet of Skilak Lake.

### **REGULATION:**

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 (a)(2)(A)(i) and (3)(A) are superseded, and (3)(B) is added by this emergency order. Under this emergency order, the following provisions are effective 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, May 1 through 11:59 p.m. Wednesday, July 31, 2019.

#### **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 January 1 - June 30, from its mouth upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located at the outlet of Skilak Lake, king salmon may not be retained or possessed; from July 1 - July 31, from an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 300 yards downstream from the mouth of the Slikok Creek upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located at the outlet of Skilak Lake, king salmon may not be retained or possessed; a person may not remove a king salmon from the water before releasing the fish;

(a)(3) king salmon less than 20 inches in length as follows:

(A) may not be retained or possessed from May 1-June 30, in unstocked lakes and ponds and in the Kenai River from its mouth upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker at the outlet of Skilak Lake; from July 1-July 31, in unstocked lakes and ponds and that portion of the Kenai River from an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 300 yards downstream from the mouth of Slikok Creek, upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker at the outlet of Skilak Lake;

(B) from July 1-July 31, may be taken in flowing waters and unstocked lakes and ponds and in the Kenai River from its mouth upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 300 yards downstream from the mouth of Slikok Creek, bag and possession limit of ten fish;

Doug Vincent-Lang,  
Commissioner

By delegation to:

---

Colton G. Lipka  
Area Management Biologist

**JUSTIFICATION:**

Consistent with 5 AAC 57.160. *Kenai River and Kasilof River Early-Run King Salmon Management Plan*, From January 1 - June 30, from its mouth upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 300 yards downstream from the mouth of the Slikok Creek, if the preseason forecast projects the inriver run to be above the lower end of the sustainable escapement goal, but below the lower end of the optimal escapement goal, the commissioner may close the sport fishery to the taking of king salmon or prohibit the retention of king salmon. In addition, from January 1 - July 31, from an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 300 yards downstream from the mouth of the Slikok Creek upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located at the outlet of Skilak Lake, if the preseason forecast projects the inriver run to be above the lower end of the sustainable escapement goal, but below the lower end of the optimal escapement goal, the commissioner shall, by emergency order, close the sport fishery to the taking of king salmon or prohibit the retention of king salmon.

The optimal escapement goal (OEG) for early-run Kenai River king salmon is 3,900 - 6,600 large king salmon (75 cm mid eye to tail fork length and longer) and the sustainable escapement goal (SEG) for early-run Kenai River king salmon is 2,800 - 5,600 large king salmon. The expectation is that the 2019 total run outlook of 3,168 large early-run Kenai River king salmon will be less than (about 34 percent of) the 1986 - 2018 average total run of approximately 9,300 large fish. If realized, the 2019 run will rank as the 4th lowest measured (31st out of 34 years) and be similar to the preliminary estimate of the 2018 total run of 3,072 large fish, which did not achieve the lower bound of the OEG and had a preseason forecast of 5,446 large fish. The 2019 early run of large Kenai River king salmon primarily originates from the two lowest brood year escapements on record which occurred consecutively during 2013 and 2014, both of which failed to meet the lower bound of the SEG. Considering forecast variability (forecast has an 80% prediction interval of 814 to 5,521 large fish), an estimated release mortality of less than 25 large king salmon, and options described in the management plan, beginning the fishery with non-retention is justified until in season assessment indicate further action is warranted.

**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.