

SPORT FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-1-23-19

Issued at Soldotna: Tuesday, June 18, 2019

Effective Date: 12:01 a.m. Monday, July 1, 2019

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July 31, 2019, unless superseded by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

EXPLANATION:

This emergency order prohibits the use of bait while sport fishing 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.

REGULATION:

The provisions of 5 AAC 57.121(1)(A) are superseded by this emergency order. Under this emergency order, the following provisions are effective beginning at 12:01 a.m., Monday, July 1 through 11:59 p.m., Wednesday, July 31, 2019:

5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area.

(1) sport fishing gear restrictions:

(A) from January 1 – July 31, 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., only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used.

Doug Vincent-Lang,
Commissioner

By delegation to:

Colton G. Lipka
Fisheries Biologist III

JUSTIFICATION:

The purpose of 5 AAC 21.359 *Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan* is to ensure adequate escapement of late-run king salmon into the Kenai River system and provide management guidelines to the department. The sustainable escapement goal (SEG) for late-run Kenai River king salmon is 13,500 to 27,000 king salmon 75 cm mid eye to tail fork and longer.

If realized, the 2019 total run preseason outlook of 21,746 large late-run Kenai River king salmon will be about half (49%) the 1986 - 2018 average total run of approximately 44,000 large fish. The 2019 run would rank as the 4th lowest measured (31 out of 34 years) and be similar or slightly better than the preliminary estimate of the 2018 total run of 17,571 large fish, which achieved the SEG under a restricted fishery. The 2019 late-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. Considering forecast variability (forecast has an 80% prediction interval of 14,972 to 27,267 large fish) and estimated

exploitation rate in a restricted fishery of between 15 to 20%, beginning the fishery by prohibiting bait is necessary in order to achieve the sustainable escapement goal. As specified in the management plan, if bait is prohibited in the sport fishery, the retention of king salmon is prohibited in the personal use fishery and commercial fishing periods of the Upper Subdistrict, excluding the East forelands, will be open for no more than 48 hours a week.

PREVIOUS EMERGENCY ORDERS AFFECTED:

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-1-09-19 issued February 14, 2019, which prohibited retention of king salmon of all sizes in the Kenai River from the mouth upstream to the outlet of Skilak Lake through June 30, 2019 and from Slikok Creek to Skilak Lake through July 31, 2019. Retention of king salmon in the Kenai River from an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 300 yards downstream from the mouth of Slikok Creek, upstream to the outlet of Skilak Lake will remain in effect through July 31, 2019.

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.