

SPORT FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-1-23-20

Issued at: Soldotna, Monday, June 15, 2020

Effective Date: 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, July 1, 2020

Expiration Date: 11:59 p.m. Friday, July 31, 2020, unless superseded by subsequent emergency order.

EXPLANATION:

This emergency order prohibits the use of bait and multiple hooks while sport fishing in the Kasilof River downstream of the Sterling Highway Bridge.

REGULATION:

The provisions of 5 AAC 56.122. (8)(B)(ii) are superseded by this emergency order. Under this emergency order, the following provisions are effective beginning 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, July 1 through 11:59 p.m. Friday, July 31, 2020.

5 AAC 56.122. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area.

- (8) Kasilof River drainage, excluding Crooked Creek and Tustumena Lake and its tributaries:
 - (B) the following special provisions apply in that portion downstream of the Sterling Highway Bridge:
 - (ii) in flowing waters, from July 1 - July 31, only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used;

Doug Vincent-Lang,
Commissioner

By delegation to:

Colton Lipka
Area Management Biologist

JUSTIFICATION:

The department has issued Emergency Order 2-KS-1-22-20 to begin the late-run king salmon sport fishery in the Kenai River prohibiting the use of bait and retention of king salmon 34 inches or greater in length. This will likely result in an increase in the sport fishing effort and catch of naturally-produced king salmon in the Kasilof River. The department manages the Kasilof River king salmon sport fishery to achieve a sustainable escapement goal (SEG) of 700 -1,400 naturally-produced king salmon as monitored through a weir at a department facility located on Crooked Creek. From 2016 - 2018, naturally-produced king salmon have had a declining trend in escapement. The 2019 escapement of 1,444 fish was an improvement compared to recent years. Restrictions that prohibited the retention of naturally-produced fish and allowed only one unbaited, single-hook artificial lure were necessary to ensure the SEG for naturally-produced king salmon and to provide broodstock in 2018 and 2019.

This emergency order to restrict the late-run king salmon sport fishery in the Kasilof River during 2020 is in part, a continuation of an incremental approach to maintain harvest opportunity while assuring the

SEG of naturally-produced king salmon and stocking goals can be achieved as king salmon production throughout Cook Inlet has been low since 2009. This action will help to determine if standard regulations can be restored, sustain natural production and maintain harvest opportunity in the Kasilof River king salmon sport fishery as well as other Southcentral Alaska king salmon sport fisheries supplemented by Crooked Creek hatchery stock.

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.