

SPORT FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-2-33-20

Issued at: Palmer, Friday, July 10, 2020

Effective Date: 6:00 a.m. Saturday, July 11, 2020

Expiration Date: 11:00 p.m. Monday,
July 13, 2020, unless superseded by
subsequent emergency order.

EXPLANATION:

This emergency order supersedes Emergency Order No. 2-KS-2-09-20, issued in Palmer on Monday, February 26, 2020. This emergency order opens the Little Susitna River drainage to sport fishing for king salmon, from its mouth upstream to the weir located at river mile 32.5. The bag and possession limit for king salmon, 20 inches or greater, is one fish and the annual limit is restricted from five king salmon to two king salmon, 20 inches or greater in length. Only unbaited, artificial lures are allowed. Waters upstream of the weir to the Parks Highway, remain catch-and-release only for king salmon with only one unbaited, single hook, artificial lure allowed.

REGULATION:

The provisions of 5 AAC 60.122. (9)(A) and (B) are superseded by this emergency order. Under this emergency order, the following provisions are effective 6:00 a.m. Saturday, July 11 through 11:00 p.m. Monday, July 13, 2020:

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 January 1 – July 13, in flowing waters from its mouth upstream to the weir (river mile 32.5), sport fishing is open for king salmon; with a bag and possession of one king salmon 20 inches or greater in length; except as provided in (b) of this section, there is an annual limit of two king salmon 20 inches or greater in length and a harvest record is required as specified in 5 AAC 75.006; from the weir upstream to the Parks Highway, 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 October 1 – July 13, in flowing waters from the weir (river mile 32.5) upstream to the Parks Highway, only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used;

Doug Vincent-Lang,
Commissioner

By delegation to:

Sam Ivey
Area Management Biologist

JUSTIFICATION:

The sustainable escapement goal for king salmon on the Little Susitna River is 2,100–4,300 fish. As of July 10, 2020, 2,154 king salmon have been counted at the Little Susitna weir. The weir count is considered a minimum count because it is likely additional fish passed the weir undetected during a period the weir was inundated with high water from approximately June 13 - June 18. However, count data prior to and after flooding indicates a relatively small number of king salmon were not counted. Therefore, this management action is based solely on the weir count and a projected escapement of about 2,300 fish. At this time, it is warranted to allow the sport fishery to proceed by regulation downstream of the weir and for the fishery upstream of the weir to remain catch-and-release only. The estimated harvest of less than 75 fish due to this action will not lower the final escapement below the lower end of the escapement goal if harvest is only allowed downstream of the weir.

PREVIOUS EMERGENCY ORDERS AFFECTED:

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-2-09-20, which prohibited the retention of king salmon in the Little Susitna River and limited sport fishing gear to one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure only, 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.