

# SPORT FISHING

## *Emergency Order*

ALASKA DEPARTMENT  
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

**Emergency Order No.** 3-RS-I-04-20

**Issued at:** Glennallen, Wednesday,  
June 17, 2020

**Effective Date:** 12:01 a.m. Monday, June 22, 2020

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2020, unless superseded by subsequent  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

### **EXPLANATION:**

This emergency order amends the schedule for the personal use dip net salmon fishery in the Chitina Subdistrict of the Upper Copper River District for the week of June 22, 2020.

In addition, this emergency order closes the Chitina Subdistrict Personal Use Dip Net Salmon Fishery to the retention of king salmon. King salmon incidentally taken may not be retained and must be released immediately and returned to the water unharmed.

### **REGULATION:**

Consistent with 5 AAC 77.001(b) and 5 AAC 77.591 *Copper River Personal Use Dip Net Salmon Fishery Management Plan* and 5 AAC 24.361(d) *Copper River King Salmon Management Plan* the personal use dip net salmon fishery in the Chitina Subdistrict of the Upper Copper River District will be open from 12:01 a.m. through 11:59 p.m. Monday, June 22 and open from 6:00 a.m. Wednesday, June 24 through 11:59 p.m. Sunday, June 28. In addition, the provisions of 5 AAC 77.591(e) are superseded by this emergency order effective 12:01 a.m. Monday, June 22, 2020:

### **5 AAC 77.591. Copper River Personal Use Dip Net Salmon Fishery Management Plan.**

(e) The total annual limit for each personal use salmon fishing permit is 25 salmon for the head of household and 10 salmon for each dependent of the permit holder, except that king salmon may not be retained or possessed, and any king salmon caught must be released immediately and returned to the water unharmed.

Douglas Vincent-Lang  
Commissioner



By delegation to: \_\_\_\_\_

Mark A. Somerville  
Area Management Biologist

### **JUSTIFICATION:**

The Copper River personal use fishery is managed under direction of the *Copper River Personal Use Dip Net Salmon Fishery Management Plan* (5 AAC 77.591). The plan establishes the season from June 7 through September 30 and directs the department to establish weekly periods based on Miles Lake sonar counts. During June 8 – 14, there were 74,082 salmon counted past the Miles Lake sonar. The

preseason projection for this period was 75,510 salmon, which results in a weekly deficit of 1,428 salmon. Copper River sockeye salmon migratory timing and the previous five-year average harvest and participation rates indicate sufficient numbers of salmon available to maintain 138 hours of fishing time during the week of June 22 – 28.

The *Copper River King Salmon Fishery Management Plan* directs the department to manage the Copper River fisheries to achieve a sustainable escapement goal in the upper Copper River of 24,000 or more king salmon. The 2020 king salmon run to the Copper River appears to be substantially weaker than the preseason forecast of 60,000 king salmon. The cumulative commercial harvest, as of June 16, is approximately 5,751 king salmon and is below the expected level for this date. Catch rates of king salmon in the Native Village of Eyak research fish wheels through June 16 indicate a cumulative catch 32% below average for this date. Additionally, recapture rates of king salmon at Canyon Creek indicate a potential inriver return below the lower end escapement goal of 24,000 king salmon for the Copper River drainage. A cumulative count of 54 king salmon have passed the Gulkana River king salmon counting tower through June 16. These counts are 71% below average for this date. These inseason run strength indicators through June 16, and generally poor stock performance trend over the last 11 years, indicate the need to take restrictive action. Therefore, prohibiting the retention of king salmon in the Chitina Subdistrict personal use dip net fishery is justified to ensure the sustainable escapement goal is achieved.

**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) 459-7357, and the Glennallen Area Office of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish, PO Box 47, Glennallen, AK 99588, (907) 822-3309.