

SPORT FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 3-R-U-02-20

Issued at: Fairbanks, April 9, 2020

Effective Date: 12:01 a.m.
Saturday, April 11, 2020

Expiration Date: Until superseded by
subsequent emergency order.

EXPLANATION:

This emergency order rescinds Emergency Order No. 3-R-U-01-20 and opens Polaris Lake to catch-and-release sport fishing and closes Kimberly Lake to sport fishing.

REGULATION:

Under the authority of 5 AAC 75.003(5) the provisions of 5 AAC 74.010(c)(33) and (34) are added by this emergency order. Under this emergency order the following provisions become effective 12:01 a.m. Saturday, April 11, 2020:

5 AAC 74.010. Seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Tanana River Area.

(c)(33) Kimberly Lake is closed to sport fishing;

(34) Polaris Lake is open to catch-and-release fishing for all species; any fish species caught must be released immediately and returned to the water unharmed.

Douglas Vincent-Lang
Commissioner

By delegation to: *Heather Scannell*
Heather Scannell
Area Management Biologist

JUSTIFICATION:

In 2019, Kimberly and Polaris lakes surface waters exceeded EPA and DEC action levels for PFAS. As a precautionary measure, Kimberly and Polaris lakes were closed to sport fishing. At that time, a catch-and-release regulation was not an option because the department did not have the regulatory authority to impose restrictions, other than outright closure, based on contamination. In December 2019, the Board of Fisheries adopted a regulation that allows

catch-and-release fishing in stocked waters that have become contaminated. Polaris Lake is a popular sport fishery among residents of Eielson Air Force Base. Allowing catch-and-release fishing in Polaris Lake is warranted because it will provide fishing opportunity for remaining stocked fish and resident fish, and still maintain a precautionary measure by not allowing the anglers to retain fish.

Kimberly Lake will remain closed. There is no public access to Kimberly Lake and it is assumed that any fish previously stocked did not survive due to poor over-wintering conditions. Future fish stockings at Kimberly Lake are suspended indefinitely.

PREVIOUS EMERGENCY ORDERS AFFECTED:

No. 3-R-U-01-20: Surface waters in Kimberly and Polaris lakes have tested to exceed EPA and DEC action levels for PFAS. As a precautionary measure, Kimberly Lake and Polaris Lake are closed to sport fishing.

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) 459-7207.