

SPORT FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 3-KS-V-02-20

Issued at: Fairbanks, Tuesday, June 9, 2020.

Effective Date: 12:01 a.m. Friday, June 12, 2020.

Expiration Date: 11:59 p.m. Saturday, July 25, 2020, unless superseded by subsequent emergency order.

EXPLANATION:

This emergency order extends the regulatory action initially taken in Emergency Order 3-KS-V-01-20 and continues the king salmon sport fishing closure in the Kuskokwim River drainage (excluding Kuskokwim Bay drainages). In addition, only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used in the Kuskokwim–Goodnews Area.

All king salmon caught incidentally in the Kuskokwim River drainage while fishing for other species may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately.

REGULATION:

The provisions of 5 AAC 71.010. (c)(3)(A) and (B) are superseded and (c)(10) and (d)(1)(G) are added by this emergency order. Under this emergency order, the following provisions are effective 12:01 a.m. Friday, June 12 through 11:59 p.m. Saturday, July 25, 2020:

5 AAC 71.010. Seasons and bag, possession, annual, and size limits for the Kuskokwim–Goodnews Area.

(c)(3)(A) sport fishing for king salmon is closed; king salmon may not be taken or possessed.

(c)(3)(B) the bag and possession limit for pink, sockeye, chum, and coho salmon is three fish, with no size limit; however, the aggregate daily bag and possession limit of all salmon species may not exceed three salmon.

(c)(10) in the Kuskokwim River drainage, sport fishing for king salmon is closed; king salmon may not be taken or possessed.

(d)(1)(G) only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used in the remainder of the Kuskokwim – Goodnews Area not specified in (d)(1)(A–F).

Douglas Vincent-Lang
Commissioner

DocuSigned by:

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By delegation to: _____

John Chythlook
Area Management Biologist

JUSTIFICATION:

In 2019 the estimated total run for Kuskokwim River king salmon was approximately 226,987 and the spawning escapement was approximately 188,483. In 2019, the drainagewide escapement goal was attained and exceeded, however, there were substantial closures of the subsistence fishery. Restrictions to the subsistence king salmon fishery have occurred in 2020, notably the front end closure of the subsistence fishery through June 11, and rolling closures in the subsistence fishery thereafter. The 2020 forecasted range of king salmon returning to the Kuskokwim River drainage is 193,000–261,000. Though it is early in the season, both Bethel Test Fish and the Kuskokwim Sonar have not seen a large number of king salmon past those projects at this time.

The current restrictions of the subsistence salmon fishery on the Kuskokwim River in 2020 warrant a total closure of sport fishing for king salmon in the Kuskokwim River drainage and the prohibition of bait and multiple hooks. This may be relaxed depending on run strength indicators through the season.

PREVIOUS EMERGENCY ORDERS AFFECTED:

Emergency Order 3-KS-V-01-20 closed sport fishing for king salmon in the Kuskokwim River drainage from May 1 through June 11, and expires 11:59 p.m. Thursday, June 11, 2020. It also allowed only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure to be used in the Kuskokwim-Goodnews Area. Emergency Order 3-KS-V-01-20 extends this closure and gear restriction through the end of the king salmon season.

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.