

# SPORT FISHING

## *Emergency Order*

ALASKA DEPARTMENT  
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-1-42-21

Issued at Soldotna: Monday, July 12, 2021

Effective Date: 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, July 14, 2021

Expiration Date: 11:59 p.m. Saturday,  
July 31, 2021, unless superseded by  
subsequent emergency order.

### **EXPLANATION:**

This emergency order supersedes Emergency Order 2-KS-1-24-21, issued June 17, 2021. In the Kenai River from its mouth upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 300 yards downstream from the mouth of the Slikok Creek only one unbaited, single-hook may be used, and anglers may not retain king salmon of any size while sport fishing through July 31, 2021. King salmon may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately.

### **REGULATION:**

The provisions of 5 AAC 57.120. (a)(2)(A)(i), (a)(3)(A) and (C) and 5 AAC 57.121. (1)(B) are superseded by this emergency order. The following provisions are effective 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, July 14 through 11:59 p.m. Saturday, July 31, 2021:

#### **5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area.**

(a)(2) king salmon 20 inches or greater in length, as follows:

(A) may be taken only from July 14 – July 31, in the Kenai River from its mouth to an ADF&G regulatory marker located at the outlet of Skilak Lake, as follows:

(i) from its mouth upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 300 yards downstream from the mouth of Slikok Creek, king salmon may not be retained or possessed, may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately; from an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 300 yards downstream from the mouth of the Slikok Creek upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located at the outlet of Skilak Lake, king salmon may not be retained or possessed, may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately:

(a)(3) king salmon less than 20 inches in length may be taken, as follows:

(A) from July 14 – July 31, king salmon may not be retained or possessed, may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately; in flowing waters and unstocked lakes and ponds and that portion of the Kenai River from an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 300 yards downstream from the mouth of Slikok Creek, upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker at the outlet of Skilak Lake:

(C) from July 14 – July 31, may not be retained or possessed, may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately; in flowing waters and unstocked lakes and ponds and in the Kenai River from its mouth upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 300 yards downstream from the mouth of Slikok Creek:

#### **5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area.**

(1) sport fishing gear restrictions:

(B) from July 14 – July 31, in the Kenai River from an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 300 yards downstream from the mouth of Slikok Creek, upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located at the outlet of Skilak Lake; only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used:

Doug Vincent-Lang,  
Commissioner

By delegation to: \_\_\_\_\_  
Colton Lipka,  
Area Management Biologist

**JUSTIFICATION:**

The purpose of 5 AAC 21.359 *Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan* is to ensure adequate escapement of late-run king salmon into the Kenai River system and provide management guidelines to the department. The optimal escapement goal (OEG) for late-run Kenai River king salmon is 15,000 to 30,000 king salmon 75 cm mid eye to tail fork and longer.

The 2021 forecast for the stock of large (> 75 cm mid eye to tail fork [METF] or approximately > 34 inches in total length) late-run king salmon in the Kenai River is 18,406 fish. Through July 11, an estimated 1,423 large king salmon have passed the River Mile 19 sonar site. King salmon passage into the Kenai River is proceeding at a rate less than what is needed to achieve the escapement goal; therefore, a restriction to the sport fishery is warranted. Inseason projections estimate end of escapement with mean run timing to be 10,778 large fish under current regulations, which is well below the escapement goal.

Consistent with the *Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan*, prohibiting bait and retention of king salmon is necessary to achieve the OEG. As specified in the management plan, if bait is prohibited in the sport fishery, the retention of king salmon is prohibited in the personal use fishery, and if the use of bait and the retention of king salmon is prohibited, then commercial fishing periods of the Upper Subdistrict, excluding the East Foreland Section, will be open for no more than 24 hours a week

**PREVIOUS EMERGENCY ORDERS AFFECTED:**

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-1-21-21 issued June 15, 2021, which prohibited retention of king salmon of all sizes in the Kenai River from the mouth upstream to the outlet of Skilak Lake through June 30, 2021, and from Slikok Creek to Skilak Lake through July 31, 2021. Fishing for king salmon in the Kenai River from an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 300 yards downstream from the mouth of Slikok Creek upstream to the outlet of Skilak Lake will remain restricted to catch-and-release only through July 31, 2021, to continue protecting early-run king salmon as they move upriver.

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-1-24-21 issued June 17, 2021, is superseded by this Emergency Order. EO 2-KS-1-24-21 prohibited the use of bait while sport fishing in the Kenai River from its mouth upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 300 yards downstream from the mouth of Slikok Creek.

**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.