

SPORT FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

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

Issued at: Soldotna, Tuesday, June 15, 2021

Effective Date: 12:01 a.m. Thursday, June 17, 2021

Expiration Date: 11:59 p.m. Saturday, July 31, 2021, unless superseded by subsequent emergency order.

EXPLANATION:

This emergency order prohibits the retention of king salmon of all sizes in the Kenai River from the mouth upstream to the outlet of Skilak Lake from June 17 through June 30, 2021. Retention of king salmon will remain prohibited July 1 through July 31, 2021, in waters of the Kenai River drainage from an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 300 yards downstream from the mouth of Slikok Creek, upstream to the outlet of Skilak Lake.

REGULATION:

The provisions of 5 AAC 57.120. (a)(2)(A)(i) and (3)(A) are superseded, and (3)(C) is added by this emergency order. Under this emergency order, the following provisions are effective 12:01 a.m. Thursday, June 17 through 11:59 p.m. Saturday, July 31, 2021.

5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for 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 January 1 - July 31, in the Kenai River from its mouth upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located at the outlet of Skilak Lake, with a bag and possession limit of one fish, as follows:

(i) from June 17 - June 30, from its mouth upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located at the outlet of Skilak Lake, king salmon may not be retained or possessed; from July 1 - July 31, 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; a person may not remove a king salmon from the water before releasing the fish;

(a)(3) king salmon less than 20 inches in length as follows:

(A) may not be retained or possessed from June 17 - June 30, in unstocked lakes and ponds and in the Kenai River from its mouth upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker at the outlet of Skilak Lake; from July 1 - July 31, in 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 1 - July 31, may be taken 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, bag and possession limit of ten fish;

Doug Vincent-Lang,
Commissioner

By delegation to:

Colton G. Lipka
Area Management Biologist

JUSTIFICATION:

Consistent with 5 AAC 57.160. *Kenai River and Kasilof River Early-Run King Salmon Management Plan*, from January 1— June 30, from its mouth upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 300 yards downstream from the mouth of the Slikok Creek, if the inseason inriver run projection is within the optimal escapement goal range, the commissioner shall prohibit the retention of king salmon or open the sport fishery as described in 5 AAC 57.120(a)(2)(A)(i). In addition, from January 1 - July 31, 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, if the inseason inriver run projection is within the optimal escapement goal range, the commissioner shall prohibit the retention of king salmon or open the sport fishery as described in 5 AAC 57.120(a)(2)(A)(i).

The optimal escapement goal (OEG) for early-run Kenai River king salmon is 3,900-6,600 large king salmon (75 cm mid eye to tail fork length and longer). Current projection indicates that the 2021 total run will be less than the forecast of ~ 4,400 large early-run Kenai River king salmon. Through June 13, 2021, an estimated 2,279 large king salmon have been enumerated past the RM 13.7 king salmon sonar. The inseason escapement projection ranges from approximately 3,613 large fish based on average run timing to 4,976 large fish based on a run timing of three days late. Therefore, it is warranted to prohibit retention of early-run king salmon on the Kenai River as directed in the management plan.

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.