

SPORT FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 2-RS-1-57-21

Issued at: Soldotna, Monday, August 16, 2021

Effective Date: 12:01 a.m. Saturday, August 21, 2021

Expiration Date: 11:59 p.m. Monday, September 6, 2021, unless superseded by subsequent emergency order.

EXPLANATION:

This emergency order extends the season for sport fishing for sockeye salmon to September 6, 2021, in the Russian River Sanctuary Area and in the upper Kenai River mainstem from the powerline crossing upstream to ADF&G regulatory markers located approximately 300 yards upstream of Sportsman's Landing (including the waters around the upstream end of the island near the Russian River mouth) and the Russian River from its mouth upstream 100 yards to an ADF&G marker.

Additionally, the bag and possession limits for salmon, other than king salmon and coho salmon, are increased to six fish per day and twelve fish in possession in that area of the Kenai River upstream from Skilak Lake to ADF&G regulatory markers located approximately 300 yards upstream of the public boat launch at Sportsman's Landing and the Russian River from its mouth upstream to an ADF&G marker located approximately 100 yards upstream from the mouth.

REGULATION:

The provisions of 5 AAC 57.122. (3)(A) and (10)(A) and (B) are superseded by this emergency order. Under this emergency order the following provisions are effective 12:01 a.m. Saturday, August 21 through 11:59 p.m. Monday, September 6, 2021:

5 AAC 57.122. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Middle Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area.

(3) the following bag and possession limits apply:

(A) in waters of the Kenai River upstream from Skilak Lake to ADF&G regulatory markers located approximately 300 yards upstream of the public boat launch at Sportsman's Landing, including the waters around the upstream end of the island near the Russian River mouth, and the Russian River from its confluence with the Kenai River upstream to an ADF&G marker located approximately 100 yards upstream from the mouth., the bag and possession limit for salmon, other than king salmon 16 inches or greater in length, is six fish per day and twelve in possession, of which only one per day and one in possession may be a coho salmon;

(10) the following waters of the Middle Section are open to sport fishing, only as follows:

(A) from July 15 – April 30, the Russian River sanctuary area, as defined in subparagraph (4)(D) of this section, is open to sport fishing, except sockeye salmon may be taken only from August 21 – September 6;

(B) from August 21 – September 6, the waters of the Kenai River near the confluence of the Russian River, from the powerline crossing on the Kenai River upstream to the Ferry Crossing, are open to sport fishing for sockeye salmon;

Doug Vincent-Lang,
Commissioner

By delegation to:

Colton Lipka
Area Management Biologist

JUSTIFICATION:

Through Sunday, August 15, 2021, a total of 82,539 sockeye salmon have passed the Russian River weir, located upstream of the falls. ADF&G estimates that the escapement will exceed the late-run Russian River sockeye salmon biological escapement goal (SEG) of 44,000 – 85,000 sockeye salmon. Current projections of an on-time run indicate an escapement of ~103,000 sockeye salmon, the more likely run timing scenario is to be late timing which estimates an escapement of ~140,000 sockeye salmon. Based on this information, it is appropriate to liberalize the fishery to provide more time for anglers to harvest sockeye salmon in excess of the escapement goal by extending the season in the Russian and Upper Kenai rivers.

PREVIOUS EMERGENCY ORDERS AFFECTED:

Emergency Order No. 2-RS-1-55-21 issued on August 9, 2021, increased the limit of sockeye salmon to six per day, twelve in possession, of which only one per day and one in possession may be a coho salmon, for the Russian River and a section of the mainstem Upper Kenai River. This regulatory change is effective 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, August 11 through 11:59 p.m. Friday, August 20, 2021.

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.