

# SPORT FISHING

## *Emergency Order*

ALASKA DEPARTMENT  
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

**Emergency Order No.** 2-KS-1-09-22

**Issued at:** Soldotna, Wednesday, January 26, 2022

**Effective Date:** 12:01 a.m. Friday, July 1, 2022

**Expiration Date:** 11:59 p.m. Sunday, July 31, 2022,  
unless superseded by subsequent emergency order.

### **EXPLANATION:**

This emergency order restricts sport fishing in the Kenai River from its mouth upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located at the outlet of Skilak Lake to the use of only one unbaited, single-hook artificial lure, and anglers may not retain king salmon of any size while sport fishing through July 31, 2022. 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) and (a)(3)(A) and 5 AAC 57.121. (1)(B) are superseded by this emergency order. The provisions of 5 AAC 57.120. (a)(3)(C) are added by this emergency order. The following provisions are effective 12:01 a.m. Friday, July 1 through 11:59 p.m. Sunday, July 31, 2022:

#### **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 1 – 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 1 – 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 1 – 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 1 – July 31, 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, only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used:

Doug Vincent-Lang,  
Commissioner

By delegation to:



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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 2022 forecast for the stock of large (> 75 cm mid eye-to-tail-fork-length [METF] or approximately > 34 inches in total length) late-run king salmon in the Kenai River is 16,004 fish. Based upon the difference between the forecast and actual total run from 2017-2021 there is an 80% chance the total run will be 4,084 to 27,924 fish. This prediction interval is wide and indicates a 20% chance the total run could be outside the prediction interval. The forecast is below the 1986-2021 average run of approximately 41,600 fish and less than the recent 5-year 2017-2021 average total run of approximately 17,600 large fish. If realized, this run will rank the 6th lowest (32nd out of 37 years); though larger than the 2021 preliminary estimated total run of 12,665 large fish. These estimates provide for only minimal mortality to be able to achieve the OEG.

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:**

None

**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.