

SPORT FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-1-30-22

Issued at Soldotna: Monday, June 13, 2022

Effective Date: 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, June 15, 2022

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July 31, 2022, unless superseded by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

EXPLANATION:

This emergency order supersedes Emergency Order 2-KS-1-23-22 issued June 6, 2022, Emergency Order 2-KS-1-20-22 issued April 25, 2022, and Emergency Order 2-KS-1-08-22 issued January 26, 2022. This emergency order closes king salmon sport fishing in the Kasilof River from 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, June 15 through 11:59 p.m. Friday July 15, 2022.

From 12:01 a.m. Saturday, July 16 through 11:59 p.m. Sunday, July 31, 2022, the retention of king salmon while sport fishing is prohibited in the Kasilof River downstream of the Sterling Highway Bridge. Only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used when sport fishing in these waters. King salmon may not be retained or possessed, may not be removed from the water, and must be released immediately.

From 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, June 15 through 11:59 p.m. Sunday, July 31, 2022, only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used when sport fishing from the mouth upstream to the outlet of Tustumena Lake.

REGULATION:

The provisions of 5 AAC 56.122. (8)(A)(i), (ii), and (iii) and (8)(B)(i) and (ii) are superseded by this emergency order. Under this emergency order, the following provisions are effective 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, June 15 through 11:59 p.m. Sunday, July 31, 2022.

5 AAC 56.122. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area.

(8) Kasilof River drainage, excluding Crooked Creek and Tustumena Lake and its tributaries:

(A) king salmon

(i) from June 15 – July 15, from the mouth upstream to the outlet of Tustumena Lake; is closed to sport fishing for king salmon;

(ii) from July 16 – July 31, is closed to sport fishing for king salmon from the Sterling Highway Bridge to the outlet of Tustumena Lake;

(iii) from June 15 – July 31, only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used;

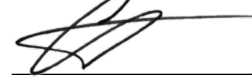
(B) the following special provisions apply in that portion downstream of the Sterling Highway Bridge:

(i) in flowing waters, from July 16 – July 31, king salmon may not be possessed or retained; king salmon caught must be released immediately; a person may not remove a king salmon from the water before releasing the fish;

(ii) in flowing waters, from June 15 – July 31, only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used;

By delegation to:

Doug Vincent-Lang,
Commissioner



Colton Lipka
Area Management Biologist

JUSTIFICATION:

As provided by 5 AAC 57.160. *Kenai River and Kasilof River Early-Run King Salmon Management Plan* (c), the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) shall manage the Kasilof River early-run king salmon sport and guided sport fisheries to achieve the sustainable escapement goal (SEG), to provide reasonable harvest opportunities over the entire run while ensuring adequate escapement of naturally-produced king salmon, and to minimize the effects of conservation actions for the Kenai River on the Kasilof River.

ADF&G has issued an Emergency Order 2-KS-1-22-22 on June 8, 2022, to close the Kenai River early-run king salmon sport fishery. This will likely result in an increase in the sport fishing effort and catch of naturally-produced early-run king salmon in the Kasilof River. ADF&G manages the Kasilof River early-run king salmon sport fishery to achieve a sustainable escapement goal of 700 - 1,400 naturally-produced king salmon as monitored through a weir at an ADF&G facility located on Crooked Creek. From 2019-2020, restrictions were necessary to ensure the SEG for naturally-produced king salmon and the broodstock goal for increased hatchery stocking were achieved. In 2021, restrictions were implemented yet the escapement goal and broodstock goal were not achieved.

Production of hatchery-produced king salmon to enhance the Kasilof River early-run king salmon fishery originates from naturally-produced king salmon that are surplus to Crooked Creek escapement needs. In addition, hatchery-produced fish that reach the weir may be used to supplement king salmon stocking programs at other Southcentral Alaska locations, thereby providing increased harvest opportunity in the Kasilof River early-run king salmon sport fishery, as well as other Southcentral Alaska king salmon sport fisheries.

This emergency order to close the early-run king salmon sport fishery in the Kasilof River during 2022 is in part, a continuation of an incremental approach to assure the SEG of naturally-produced king salmon and stocking goals can be achieved as king salmon indicator stocks around Cook Inlet have been subject to closures and restrictions this season.

Emergency Order 2-KS-1-09-22 was issued to prohibit the retention of king salmon while sport fishing in the Kenai River from its mouth upstream to the outlet of Skilak Lake. In addition, only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used when fishing for king salmon in these waters in July. These emergency orders will likely result in an increase in the sport fishing effort and catch of late-run king salmon in the Kasilof River. Therefore, to minimize the effects of conservation actions for the Kenai River on the Kasilof River, the measures in the emergency order are warranted to ensure adequate escapement of Kasilof River late-run king salmon.

PREVIOUS EMERGENCY ORDERS AFFECTED:

Emergency Order 2-KS-1-23-22 issued June 6, 2022, which prohibited retention of naturally-produced king salmon and limited sport fishing gear to one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure while sport fishing in the Kasilof River

Emergency Order 2-KS-1-20-22 issued April 25, 2022, which modified the season dates when bait was allowed in the Kasilof River king salmon fishery.

Emergency Order 2-KS-1-08-22 issued January 26, 2022, which prohibited the retention of naturally-produced king salmon while sport fishing in the Kasilof River downstream of the Sterling Highway Bridge. Additionally, only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used when sport fishing in these waters.

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.