

# SPORT FISHING

## *Emergency Order*

ALASKA DEPARTMENT  
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

**Emergency Order No.** 2-KS-7-14-23

**Issued at:** Homer, Thursday, March 02, 2023

**Effective Date:** 12:01 a.m. Monday, May 15, 2023

**Expiration Date:** 11:59 p.m. Monday, July 31, 2023, unless superseded by subsequent emergency order.

### EXPLANATION:

This emergency order reduces the bag limit for king salmon from two to one fish in the salt waters of Cook Inlet south of the latitude of Bluff Point (59° 40.00' N. lat.).

### REGULATION:

The provisions of 5 AAC 58.022. (b)(2)(g) are added by this emergency order. Under this emergency order the following provisions are effective 12:01 a.m. Monday, May 15 through 11:59 p.m. Monday, July 31, 2023:

#### **5 AAC 58.022. Waters; seasons; bag, possession, annual, and size limits; and special provisions for Cook Inlet – Resurrection Bay Saltwater Area.**

(b)(2)(G) king salmon: may be taken from May 15 – July 31; bag and possession limit of one fish; no size limit; annual harvest limit of 5 king salmon 20 inches or greater in length, excluding the waters from the Homer city dock near the entrance of the Homer Boat Harbor, including the entire Homer Boat Harbor, northwest along the east side of the Homer Spit to an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 200 yards northwest of the entrance to the fishery enhancement lagoon on the Homer Spit, including the enhancement lagoon, and to a distance 300 feet from the shore; and excluding the waters of Seldovia Bay within 300 feet of shore starting at the Alaska Marine Highway Dock south to the Seldovia Boat Harbor, including the entire Seldovia Boat Harbor, and upstream through the Seldovia slough and including the entire Seldovia Lagoon.

Doug Vincent-Lang,  
Commissioner

*Mike Booz*

By delegation to:

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Mike Booz  
Lower Cook Inlet Sport Fish Area Manager

### JUSTIFICATION:

Given the uncertainty of run strength in 2023 for all Cook Inlet king salmon stocks, including Kenai Peninsula and Northern Cook Inlet, it is justified to begin the season conservatively. Many of the inriver sport fisheries for these Cook Inlet stocks are starting with pre-season emergency order closures or restrictions. Upper Cook Inlet summer saltwater fishery north of Bluff Point will be closed to king salmon

fishing from May 15 – July 31. Despite preseason and inseason restrictions to both fresh and saltwater fisheries in 2022, the sustainable escapement goals for several Cook Inlet stocks, including the Anchor River, Kenai River early-run and late-run, and Deshka River were not met. The king salmon harvest in the lower Cook Inlet summer fishery has continued to increase in recent years from shifting effort from the upper Cook Inlet summer king salmon fishery due to EO preseason and inseason restrictions and closures. Guided effort towards king salmon in Cook Inlet salt waters may also be increasing with further restrictions to Pacific halibut from the IPHC Halibut Catch Share Plan. From 2002–2013, the king salmon harvest in this fishery averaged approximately 5,300 fish annually. In the last three years the harvest has increased over 50% from the 2002–2013 average to an average of approximately 8,300 fish and in 2021 was over 11,000 fish. Based on genetic mixed stock analyses of this fishery from 2014 through 2018, without restrictions, the fishery would likely harvest approximately 100–300 Cook Inlet king salmon in 2023.

**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.