

SPORT FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 2-RS-2-52-23

Issued at: Palmer, Monday, July 31, 2023

Effective Date: 5:00 a.m. Tuesday, August 1, 2023

Expiration Date: 10:00 p.m. Friday, August 11, 2023, unless superseded by subsequent emergency order.

EXPLANATION:

This emergency order increases the bag and possession limits for salmon, other than king salmon and coho salmon, 16 inches or greater in length to six fish for the waters of Fish Creek open to fishing for salmon. In addition, this emergency order allows sport fishing in Fish Creek seven days per week, from 5:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. each day. Retention of coho salmon is not allowed, except in the youth-only fishery, which occurs Saturday – Sunday, August 5 – 6. In the youth-only fishery, six salmon (other than king salmon) may be retained per day and in possession, of which no more than two may be a coho salmon. Weekend only fishing for all ages resumes per regulation (three salmon over 16 inches per day and in possession, of which only two may be a coho salmon), beginning 5 a.m. Saturday, August 12 after this emergency order expires. Other Knik Arm waters, including the Little Susitna River, Eklutna Tailrace, and Jim, Wasilla, and Cottonwood Creeks remain unaffected by this emergency order.

REGULATION:

The provisions of 5 AAC 60.122(a)(5)(A) and (H) are superseded by this emergency order. Under this emergency order, the following provisions are effective beginning 5:00 a.m. Tuesday, August 1 through 10:00 p.m. Friday, August 11, 2023:

5 AAC 60.122. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Knik Arm Drainages Area.

(5) in the Fish Creek drainage,

(A) from August 1 – August 11, the waters from ADF&G regulatory markers located at its mouth upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located one-quarter mile upstream from the Knik-Goose Bay Road, are open to sport fishing from 5:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., except that sport fishing for king salmon is closed; bag and possession limit for salmon, other than king and coho salmon, 16 inches or greater in length is six fish, coho salmon may only be taken as provided in (H) of this section;

(H) the waters from ADF&G regulatory markers located at the mouth of Fish Creek to an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately one-quarter mile upstream from the Knik-Goose Bay Road, are open to sport fishing to a person under 16 years of age, from 5 a.m. to 10 p.m. on August 5 and August 6; bag and possession limit for salmon, other than king salmon, 16 inches or greater in length is six fish, of which only two may be a coho salmon;

Doug Vincent-Lang,
Commissioner

By delegation to:



Samantha Oslund,
Assistant Area Management Biologist

JUSTIFICATION:

The sustainable escapement goal for sockeye salmon in Fish Creek is 15,000-45,000 fish. As of July 30, the weir count of 35,833 sockeye salmon is within the SEG and the escapement is projected to exceed the goal range. Therefore, it is warranted to increase the bag and possession limit for sockeye salmon and open additional days of fishing. Sockeye salmon harvested in the personal use fishery prior to the effective date of this emergency order will not lower the escapement below the bounds of the SEG as the fishery is downstream of the counting weir.

The SEG for coho salmon in Fish Creek is 1,200-4,400 fish. Weir counts to date indicate one coho salmon has passed the weir. As only 7% of the historical coho salmon run typically passes the weir by this date, it is too early to assess coho salmon abundance at this time, therefore sport fishing for coho salmon, will remain as written in regulation.

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.