

# SPORT FISHING

## *Emergency Order*

ALASKA DEPARTMENT  
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

**Emergency Order No.** 2-SS-2-60-23

**Issued at:** Palmer, Tuesday, August 15, 2023

**Effective Date:** 12:01 a.m. Thursday, August 17, 2023

**Expiration Date:** 11:59 p.m. Saturday, September 30, 2023, unless superseded by subsequent emergency order.

### EXPLANATION:

This emergency order closes the Deshka River to retention of coho salmon. This emergency order continues to reduce the bag limit for coho salmon to one fish in all other waters of the Susitna River drainage. Waters of Alexander Creek, Unit 2 (Parks Highway streams), Unit 3 (upper Susitna north of Talkeetna), Unit 5 (Talkeetna River), and Unit 6 (Chulitna River) of the Susitna River drainage are restricted to three salmon per day and in possession, of which only one may be a coho salmon. Waters of Unit 1 (excluding Alexander Creek and Deshka River) and Unit 4 (Yentna River) of the Susitna River drainage are restricted to three salmon per day and six in possession, of which only one per day and two in possession may be a coho salmon. Further, use of bait continues to be prohibited in all flowing waters of the Susitna River drainage, including the Deshka River. Only artificial lures are allowed.

### REGULATION:

The provisions of 5 AAC 61.110 (2)(A), 5 AAC 61.112 (1)(3), 5 AAC 61.114 (3), 5 AAC 61.116 (6), 5 AAC 61.118 (1)(3), 5 AAC 61.120 (1)(6), and 5 AAC 61.122 (1)(6) are superseded by this emergency order. Under this emergency order, the following provisions are effective 12:01 a.m. Thursday, August 17 through 11:59 p.m. Saturday, September 30, 2023:

#### **5 AAC 61.110. General provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Susitna River Drainage Area.**

(2) salmon, other than king salmon,

(A) 16 inches or greater in length may be taken from January 1 – December 31; bag and possession limit is three fish, of which no more than one per day and one in possession may be a coho salmon; a coho salmon 16 inches or greater in length that is removed from the water must be retained and becomes part of the bag limit of the person originally hooking it; a person may not remove a coho salmon from the water before releasing the fish;

#### **5 AAC 61.112. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for Unit 1 of the Susitna River Drainage Area.**

(1) in flowing waters, only unbaited, artificial lures may be used;

(3) except in Alexander Creek and the Deshka River, the bag and possession limit for salmon, other than king salmon, 16 inches or greater in length is three fish per day with six in possession, of which no more than one per day and two in possession may be a coho salmon; in the Deshka River and in all waters within a one-half mile radius of its confluence with the Susitna River, the bag and possession limit for salmon, other than king salmon is three fish, of which none may be coho salmon; coho salmon may not

be retained or possessed; coho salmon caught may not be taken out of the water and must be released immediately;

**5 AAC 61.114. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for Unit 2 of the Susitna River Drainage Area.**

(3) in flowing waters, only unbaited, artificial lures may be used;

**5 AAC 61.116. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for Unit 3 of the Susitna River Drainage Area.**

(6) the bag and possession limit for salmon, other than king salmon is three fish, of which no more than one per day and one in possession may be a coho salmon;

**5 AAC 61.118. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for Unit 4 of the Susitna River Drainage Area.**

(1) in all flowing waters, only unbaited, artificial lures may be used;

(3) the bag and possession limit for salmon, other than king salmon is three fish per day with six in possession, of which no more than one per day and two in possession may be a coho salmon;

**5 AAC 61.120. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for Unit 5 of the Susitna River Drainage Area.**

(1) in all flowing waters, only unbaited, artificial lures may be used;

(6) the bag and possession limit for salmon, other than king salmon is three fish, of which no more than one per day and one in possession may be a coho salmon;

**5 AAC 61.122. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for Unit 6 of the Susitna River Drainage Area.**

(1) in flowing waters, only unbaited, artificial lures may be used;

(6) the bag and possession limit for salmon, other than king salmon is three fish, of which no more than one per day and one in possession may be a coho salmon;

Doug Vincent-Lang  
Commissioner

By delegation to:



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Sam Ivey  
Area Management Biologist

**JUSTIFICATION:**

The Deshka River coho salmon sustainable escapement goal (SEG) is 10,200–24,100 fish. As of August 14, only 965 coho salmon have passed upstream of the weir with a projected escapement of 1,653 fish. Flooding that occurred early in the season may have resulted in some fish passing upstream undetected; however, daily weir counts since weir recovery indicate far fewer fish missed than needed to project achievement of the SEG. Reports by guides and anglers and observations by staff indicate below average fishing success on the majority of fishing days to date across the Susitna River drainage streams. Reports and observations on the Deshka River indicate below average numbers of coho salmon holding in the mouth area and likely too low to achieve the escapement goal at this time. Therefore, it is warranted to close the Deshka River to the retention of coho salmon and conserve coho salmon in the remainder of the Susitna River drainage.

**PREVIOUS EMERGENCY ORDERS AFFECTED:**

Emergency Order 2-SS-2-56-23 issued Thursday, August 10, 2023 is superseded by this emergency order.

**DISTRIBUTION:**

The distribution list for this emergency order is on file at the Region II Office of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish, 333 Raspberry Road, Anchorage, AK 99518, (907) 267-2218.