UPPER COOK INLET COMMERCIAL FISHING ANNOUNCEMENT No. 22
EMERGENCY ORDER NUMBER 2S-22-19

Upper Cook Inlet (UCI) Commercial Fishing Announcement No. 22 extends commercial salmon fishing with set gillnets in the Kenai, Kasilof, and East Foreland sections of the Upper Subdistrict from 7:00 p.m. until 11:00 p.m. on Thursday, August 1, 2019. By regulation, commercial fishing with set gillnets will be open in the Kenai, Kasilof, and East Foreland sections of the Upper Subdistrict for a regularly scheduled fishing period from 7:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, August 1, 2019.

This announcement also extends commercial fishing with drift gillnets to the Expanded Kenai and Expanded Kasilof sections of the Upper Subdistrict and Anchor Point Section of the Lower Subdistrict from 7:00 p.m. until 11:00 p.m. on Thursday, August 1, 2019. By regulation, commercial fishing with drift gillnets will be open in all waters of the Central District normally open to drift gillnetting from 7:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, August 1, 2019.

All other set gillnet fisheries in UCI will fish the regularly scheduled period from 7:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, August 1, 2019, except for setnetting in that portion of the Western Subdistrict of the Central District south of the latitude of Redoubt Point, which is open from 6:00 a.m. until 10:00 p.m. Northern District setnetters are reminded of gear restrictions for fishing periods on August 1 and August 5 that were announced in UCI Commercial Fishing Announcement No. 21, which limited legal gear in the General Subdistrict of the Northern District south of the Susitna River, and in the Eastern Subdistrict of the Northern District to no more than two set gillnets per permit. Legal gear in the General Subdistrict of the Northern District east of the Susitna River, which includes Fire Island, will be limited to no more than one set gillnet per permit.

On July 26, 2019, Upper Cook Inlet (UCI) Commercial Fisheries staff estimated the total Kenai River sockeye salmon run through July 25 to be 1.6 million fish. The final run to the Kenai River is projected to exceed 2.3 million sockeye salmon. As of July 30, the Kasilof River sockeye salmon run is 86% complete based on average run timing and projects a final escapement of more than
366,000 fish. The biological escapement goal (BEG) for Kasilof River sockeye salmon is 160,000–340,000 fish. In the Kenai River, average sockeye salmon passage into the Kenai River is 68% complete through July 30 and projects a final passage of more than 1.6 million fish. The inriver goal for Kenai River sockeye salmon is 1.0–1.3 million fish. Fishing in the above described waters is warranted in order to harvest sockeye salmon returning to the Kenai and Kasilof rivers.

Beginning August 1, 2019, management of the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery returns to provisions found in 5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan and 5 AAC 21.365 Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan. The Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan states that subject to provisions of other management plans, for Kenai River sockeye salmon runs of 2.3 million to 4.6 million fish, the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery will fish weekly regular fishing periods as specified in 5 AAC 21.320, and that the commissioner may, by emergency order, allow extra fishing periods of no more than 51 hours per week. This announcement is in compliance with these management plan provisions.