

SPORT FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 3-KS-V-02-22

Issued at: Fairbanks, Thursday, April 7, 2022.

Effective Date: 12:01 a.m. Sunday, May 1, 2022.

Expiration Date: 11:59 p.m. Saturday, June 11, 2022, unless superseded by subsequent emergency order.

EXPLANATION:

This emergency order closes the Kuskokwim River drainage (excluding Kuskokwim Bay drainages) to sport fishing for king salmon from May 1 through June 11. In addition, only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used in the Kuskokwim–Goodnews Area.

All king salmon caught incidentally in the Kuskokwim River drainage while fishing for other species may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately.

REGULATION:

The provisions of 5 AAC 71.010 (c)(3)(A) and (c)(3)(B) are superseded and (c)(10) and (d)(1)(G) are added by this emergency order. Under this emergency order, the following provisions are effective 12:01 a.m. Sunday, May 1 through 11:59 p.m. Saturday, June 11, 2022:

5 AAC 71.010. Seasons and bag, possession, annual, and size limits for the Kuskokwim–Goodnews Area.

(c)(3)(A) sport fishing for king salmon is closed; king salmon may not be taken or possessed;

(c)(3)(B) the bag and possession limit for pink, sockeye, chum, and coho salmon is three fish, with no size limit; however, the aggregate daily bag and possession limit of salmon, other than king salmon, may not exceed three fish;

(c)(10) in the Kuskokwim River drainage, sport fishing for king salmon is closed; king salmon may not be taken or possessed.

(d)(1)(G) only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used in the remainder of the Kuskokwim – Goodnews Area not specified in (d)(1)(A–F);

Douglas Vincent-Lang
Commissioner

John Chythlook

By delegation to: _____

John Chythlook
Area Management Biologist

JUSTIFICATION:

The 2022 forecasted range of king salmon returning to the Kuskokwim River drainage is 99,000–161,000. This projection indicates that the Kuskokwim River king salmon run in 2022 may be similar to the 2021 run. In 2021 the estimated total run for Kuskokwim River king salmon was approximately 129,751 and the spawning escapement was approximately 101,000. In 2021, the drainagewide escapement goal was attained, however, there were substantial closures of the subsistence fishery.

The *Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Plan* (5 AAC 07.365) mandates that when the projected escapement is within the drainagewide escapement goal range, the sport and commercial fisheries are closed through June 11. If the 2022 run materializes as expected, there is not enough fish for a full subsistence harvest (i.e., 110,000 fish) and achieving the midpoint of the drainagewide escapement goal (i.e., 92,500 fish).

Based on the prescriptions of the management plan and forecast, a total closure of sport fishing for king salmon in the Kuskokwim River drainage and the prohibition of bait and multiple hooks is warranted. This may be relaxed or extended depending on run strength indicators prior to June 12.

DISTRIBUTION:

The distribution list for this emergency order is on file at the Region III Office of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish, 1300 College Road, Fairbanks, AK 99701, (907) 459-7207.