

# SPORT FISHING

## *Emergency Order*

ALASKA DEPARTMENT  
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

**Emergency Order No.** 2-KS-2-29-20

**Issued at:** Palmer, Tuesday, July 7, 2020

**Effective Date:** 6:00 a.m. Wednesday, July 8, 2020

**Expiration Date:** 11:00 p.m. Monday, July 13, 2020, unless superseded by subsequent emergency order.

### EXPLANATION:

This emergency order supersedes Emergency Order No. 2-KS-2-8-20 issued in Palmer on February 26, 2020. This emergency order restores methods and means and bag and possession limits for king salmon in the Deshka River sport fishery; the annual limit is restricted from five king salmon to two king salmon, 20 inches or greater in length, and harvest restricted to downstream of the weir only and within a half mile radius of the mouth (bait and multiple hooks may be used downstream of the weir). Waters upstream of the weir to regulatory markers located near Chijuk Creek (river mile 17), remain catch-and-release only for king salmon with only one unbaited, single hook, artificial lure allowed. Actions taken in Emergency Order No. 2-KS-2-8-20 to close Unit 2 of the Susitna River to sport fishing for king salmon and restrict sport fishing for king salmon in the remainder of the Susitna River drainage to catch-and-release remain in effect (except Deshka River) under this emergency order. In areas open to catch-and-release fishing, sport fishing gear continues to be limited to one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure only in all waters of the Susitna River drainage. A single-hook is defined as a hook with only one point.

### REGULATION:

The provisions of 5 AAC 61.110. (1)(A) and (B)(i), 5 AAC 61.112. (1), (4), (6)(A) and (B), 5 AAC 61.114. (1) and (3), 5 AAC 61.116. (2), 5 AAC 61.118. (1), (4), and (7)(A), 5 AAC 61.120. (1), and 5 AAC 61.122. (1) and (4)(A) are superseded by this emergency order. Under this emergency order, the following provisions are effective, beginning 6:00 a.m. Wednesday, June 8 through 11:00 p.m. Monday, July 13, 2020:

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

- (1) king salmon may not be retained or possessed; king salmon caught must be released immediately; a person may not remove a king 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 one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used;
- (4) king salmon may not be retained or possessed; king salmon caught must be released immediately; a person may not remove a king salmon from the water before releasing the fish;
- (6) in the Deshka River drainage, including Trapper Lake,
  - (B) from its mouth upstream to the weir (river mile 7), and in all waters within a one-half mile radius of its confluence with the Susitna River, king salmon may be taken from January 1 - July 13; bag and possession limit is one fish 20 inches or greater in length and two in possession; an annual limit of two king salmon 20 inches or greater in length and a harvest record is required, as specified in 5 AAC 75.006; from the weir upstream to regulatory markers near Chijuk Creek (river mile 17), king salmon may not be retained or possessed and only one unbaited, single hook, artificial lure may be used; a king salmon 20 inches or greater in length removed from the water shall be retained and becomes a part of

the bag limit of the person originally hooking it; a person may not remove a king salmon from the water before releasing the fish;

**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.**

- (1) from May 1 - July 13, Unit 2 is open to sport fishing for all finfish species, except king salmon; sport fishing for king salmon is closed;
- (3) in flowing waters only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used;
- (15) from May 1 - July 13, sport fishing for any finfish species is not allowed from 11:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.;

**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.**

- (2) from May 1 - July 13, king salmon may not be retained or possessed; king salmon caught must be released immediately; a person may not remove a king salmon from the water before releasing the fish; sport fishing for any finfish species is not allowed from 11:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.;

**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 flowing waters only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used;
- (2) from May 1 – July 13, sport fishing is not allowed from 11:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.;
- (4) king salmon may not be retained or possessed; king salmon caught must be released immediately; a person may not remove a king salmon from the water before releasing the fish;
- (6) in the Fish Lake Creek drainage,
  - (A) king salmon may not be retained or possessed; king salmon caught must be released immediately; a person may not remove a king salmon from the water before releasing the fish;
- (7) in the Lake Creek drainage,
  - (A) from an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 100 yards upstream of its mouth to an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately one-quarter mile upstream of Bulchitna Lake, only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used;
  - (C) king salmon may not be retained or possessed; king salmon caught must be released immediately; a person may not remove a king salmon from the water before releasing the fish;

**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 flowing waters only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used;
- (2) from May 1 – July 13, sport fishing is not allowed from 11:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.;
- (3) in the Clear (Chunilna) Creek drainage;
  - (B) king salmon may not be retained or possessed; king salmon caught must be released immediately; a person may not remove a king salmon from the water before releasing the fish;

**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 one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used;
- (4) in the East Fork of the Chulitna River drainage, including all waters within a one-quarter mile radius of its confluence of the East Fork and West Fork and including the Middle Fork of the Chulitna and the first quarter mile of Honolulu Creek,

(A) the waters are open to sport fishing for all finfish species, including king salmon; king salmon may not be retained or possessed; king salmon caught must be released immediately; a person may not remove a king salmon from the water before releasing the fish;

Doug Vincent-Lang,  
Commissioner

By delegation to:

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Sam Ivey,  
Area Management Biologist

**JUSTIFICATION:**

Emergency order No. 2-KS-2-8-20 issued prior to the season, closed the king salmon sport fishery in Unit 2 of the Susitna River and restricted other areas of the Susitna River drainage to catch-and-release of fishing for king salmon.

The biological escapement goal (BEG) for king salmon in the Deshka River is 9,000 to 18,000 fish, as measured at the weir located at river mile 7. The escapement goal has been achieved with approximately 10,200 fish passed the weir to date and a projection of 11,200. Therefore, it is warranted to open the Deshka River king salmon fishery to harvest. The estimated harvest of less than 300 fish due to this action will not lower the final escapement below the lower end of the escapement goal.

Other stocks of the Susitna River drainage where abundance has trended upward in recent years and where performance was favorable in 2019 and escapement goals achieved, such as Yentna, Talkeetna, and Chulitna rivers, will remain open to catch-and-release fishing with a continued gear restriction allowing one unbaited, single hook, artificial only lure only. Fishing success on Yentna River tributaries is reportedly good at the historical peak of the run. These king salmon stocks will be assessed post season by aerial survey.

**PREVIOUS EMERGENCY ORDERS AFFECTED:**

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-2-8-20, which closed fishing for king salmon in Unit 2 of the Susitna River, prohibited the retention of king salmon in the rest of the Susitna drainage and limited sport fishing gear to one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure only, 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.