

SPORT FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 2-SS-2-46-24

Issued at: Palmer, Friday, August 2, 2024

Effective Date: 12:01 a.m. Tuesday, August 6, 2024

Expiration Date: 11:59 p.m. Monday, September 30, 2024, unless superseded by subsequent emergency order.

EXPLANATION:

This emergency order prohibits the use of bait on the Little Susitna River and Jim Creek and reduces the bag and possession limit for salmon, other than king salmon, 16 inches or greater in length to three per day and in possession, of which, only one may be a coho salmon. The use of bait is prohibited, only unbaited, artificial lures may be used. The area affected by this emergency order includes all waters of the Little Susitna River from its confluence with Cook Inlet upstream to the Parks Highway and the Jim Creek drainage.

REGULATION:

The provisions of 5 AAC 60.122(a)(9)(B) and (F) are superseded and 5 AAC 60.122(a)(8)(iii) and (iv) are added by this emergency order. Under this emergency order, the following provisions are effective 12:01 a.m. Tuesday, August 6, 2024, through 11:59 p.m. Monday, September 30, 2024:

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.

(a)(8) in the Knik River drainage, including Jim Creek and the Eklutna Tailrace, as follows:

(F) except as specified in (B) of this paragraph, in the Jim Creek drainage, downstream to the Knik River and continuing downstream on the Knik River to the boundary of the closed waters described in (A) of this paragraph, from January 1 – December 31, sport fishing is open for all finfish species except king salmon, except that

(iii) only unbaited, artificial lures may be used;

(iv) salmon, other than king salmon, 16 inches or greater in length; bag and possession limit is three fish, of which only one may be a coho salmon;

(a)(9) in the Little Susitna River drainage,

(B) in the flowing waters from its mouth upstream to the Parks Highway, only unbaited, artificial lures may be used;

(F) salmon, other than king salmon, 16 inches or greater in length; bag and possession limit is three fish, of which only one may be a coho salmon; a person, after taking a bag limit of salmon other than king salmon, 16 inches or greater in length from the Little Susitna River, may not sport fish that same day for any species of fish in waters open to sport fishing for salmon on the Little Susitna River.

Doug Vincent-Lang
Commissioner

By delegation to:



Samantha Oslund
Area Management Biologist

JUSTIFICATION:

The Little Susitna River coho salmon sustainable escapement goal (SEG) is 9,200 – 17,700 fish. While still early in the run, projections of escapement are trending down and the SEG may not be achieved. As of August 1, 585 coho salmon have passed upstream of the Little Susitna River weir and the escapement is projected to be 5,291 fish. Sport harvest above the weir in average to below-average run years can be near 1,000 fish due to the high effort in this fishery and reducing harvest potential at this time until run strength can be assessed is warranted. Similarly, coho salmon counts at the Jim Creek weir are below average with only 17 coho salmon past the weir. It is justified to reduce catch efficiency of coho salmon at the Little Susitna River and Jim Creek in order to reduce mortality of coho salmon until it can be determined the coho salmon run is sufficient to support additional harvest.

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.