

PERSONAL USE

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 3-RS-I-7-24

Issued at: Glennallen, Wednesday,
June 19, 2024

Effective Date: 12:01 a.m. Monday, June 24, 2024

Expiration Date: 11:59 p.m. August 31,
2024, unless superseded by subsequent
emergency order.

EXPLANATION:

This emergency order amends the schedule for the Chitina Subdistrict personal use dip net salmon fishery for the week of June 24 – 30, 2024.

In addition, this emergency order closes the Chitina Subdistrict personal use dip net salmon fishery to the retention of king salmon. King salmon incidentally caught may not be retained and must be released immediately.

REGULATION:

Consistent with 5 AAC 77.001(b) and 5 AAC 77.591 *Copper River Personal Use Dip Net Salmon Fishery Management Plan* and 5 AAC 24.361 *Copper River King Salmon Management Plan* the personal use dip net salmon fishery in the Chitina Subdistrict of the Upper Copper River District will be open from 12:01 a.m. Monday, June 24 through 11:59 p.m. Sunday, June 30. In addition, the provisions of 5 AAC 77.591 (e) are superseded by this emergency order effective 12:01 a.m. Monday, June 24, 2024:

5 AAC 77.591. Copper River Personal Use Dip Net Salmon Fishery Management Plan.

(e) The total annual limit for each personal use salmon fishing permit is 25 salmon for the head of household and 10 salmon for each dependent of the permit holder, except that king salmon may not be possessed or retained; king salmon caught must be released immediately.

Douglas Vincent-Lang
Commissioner



By delegation to: _____
Mark A. Somerville
Area Management Biologist

JUSTIFICATION:

The Copper River personal use fishery is managed under direction of the *Copper River Personal Use Dip Net Salmon Fishery Management Plan* (5 AAC 77.591). The plan establishes the season from June 7 through September 30 and directs the department to establish weekly periods based on Miles Lake sonar counts. During June 10 – 16, there were 155,561 salmon counted past the Miles Lake sonar. The preseason projection for this period was 69,010 salmon, which results in a surplus of 86,551 salmon. Copper River sockeye salmon migratory timing and the previous

three-year average harvest and participation rates indicate sufficient numbers of salmon available to allow 168 hours of fishing time during the week of June 24 – 30, an increase of 8 hours from the preseason schedule.

The *Copper River King Salmon Fishery Management Plan* (5 AAC 24.361) directs the department to manage the Copper River fisheries to achieve a sustainable escapement goal of 21,000–31,000 king salmon. The 2024 king salmon run to the Copper River appears weaker than the preseason forecast of 47,000 king salmon. Catch rates of king salmon in the Native Village of Eyak research fish wheels through June 17 are the lowest on record since 2003 and recapture rates indicate a potential inriver return near the lower bound of the king salmon escapement goal. Additionally, review of sonar king salmon apportionment trends over the last 5 years and anecdotal catch reports from the personal use, subsistence, and sport fisheries also indicate king salmon abundance may be less than expected. Due to the concerns that the king salmon escapement goal may not be met, it is justified to close the Chitina Subdistrict personal use dip net salmon fishery to the retention of king salmon.

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) 459-7357, and the Glennallen Area Office of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish, PO Box 47, Glennallen, AK 99588, (907) 822-3309.