

SPORT FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 2-KS-7-8-25

Issued at: Homer, Tuesday, February 11, 2025

Effective Date: 12:01 a.m. Saturday, May 24, 2025

Expiration Date: 11:59 p.m. Tuesday, July 15, 2025,
unless superseded by subsequent emergency order.

EXPLANATION:

This emergency order restricts the use of bait in the Ninilchik River during the Memorial Day weekend (May 24 – 26, 2025), and the following two weekends and the Monday following each weekend (May 31 – June 2 and June 7 – 9), the youth only fishery on June 4, and from June 16 – July 15.

REGULATION:

The provisions of 5 AAC 56.122 (a)(6)(D)(i), (a)(6)(D)(ii), and (a)(6)(G) are superseded by this emergency order. Under this emergency order, the following provisions are effective 12:01 a.m. Saturday, May 24 through 11:59 p.m. Tuesday, July 15, 2025:

5 AAC 56.122. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area.

(a)(6) Ninilchik River drainage:

(D) open to sport fishing for king salmon from its mouth upstream to ADF&G regulatory markers located approximately two miles upstream

(i) on Memorial Day weekend and the following two weekends and the Monday following each of those weekends; the bag and possession limit is two hatchery king salmon, 20 inches or greater in length and 10 hatchery king salmon under 20 inches; naturally-produced king salmon may not be retained; only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used; a person who takes and retains two king salmon 20 inches or greater in length from the Ninilchik River may not sport fish in the Ninilchik River, Deep Creek, or the Anchor River for the rest of that day;

(ii) from June 16 – July 15; the bag and possession limit is two hatchery king salmon, 20 inches or greater in length and 10 hatchery king salmon under 20 inches; naturally-produced king salmon may not be retained; only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used; a person who takes and retains two king salmon 20 inches or greater in length from the Ninilchik River drainage may not sport fish in the Ninilchik River drainage for the rest of that day; and

(G) the Ninilchik River from the outlet of the Ninilchik small boat harbor to ADF&G regulatory markers approximately two miles upstream is open to sport fishing to a person under 16 years of age during the designated youth fishery which occurs on the second Wednesday after Memorial Day between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 9:59 p.m.; the king salmon bag and possession limit is two hatchery king salmon of any size and naturally-produced king salmon may not be retained; only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used; annual limit and other restrictions specified in (D)(iii) apply; a harvest record is required as specified in 5 AAC 75.006; a person who takes and retains two king salmon may not sport fish in the Ninilchik River for the rest of the day;

Doug Vincent-Lang,

Commissioner

By delegation to:

Mike Booz

Mike Booz

Lower Cook Inlet Sport Fish Area Manager

JUSTIFICATION:

The Ninilchik River sustainable escapement goal (SEG) was not achieved in the last three consecutive years. The Ninilchik River is stocked with hatchery king salmon to provide harvest opportunity for sport anglers and to provide broodstock to support the Kachemak Bay stocking program. Only naturally-produced king salmon can be used for broodstock for stocking the Ninilchik River. The broodstock collection goal for stocking the Ninilchik River has been reduced in recent years.

As specified in the *Anchor River, Deep Creek, and Ninilchik River king salmon sport fishery management plan* (5 AAC 56.130), the commissioner may, by emergency order, further liberalize or restrict the Ninilchik River hatchery king salmon sport fishery to provide more harvest opportunity or achieve the SEG and broodstock collection goals. Based on the low escapements of naturally-produced king salmon in the previous three years, removing the use of bait will reduce the catch and catch-and-release mortality of naturally-produced king salmon when fishing for hatchery king salmon.

DISTRIBUTION:

The distribution list for this emergency order is on file at the Region 2 Office of Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish, 333 Raspberry Road, Anchorage, AK 99518, (907) 267-2218.