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Advisory Announcement
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UPPER COOK INLET COMMERCIAL FISHING ANNOUNCEMENT No. 13
EMERGENCY ORDER NUMBER 2S-13-20

Upper Cook Inlet Commercial Fishing Announcement No. 13 opens commercial salmon fishing with set gillnets in the Kasilof Section of the Upper Subdistrict from 12:00 p.m. noon until 8:00 p.m. on Wednesday, July 8, 2020. Drift gillnets will be allowed in the Kasilof Section (regular Kasilof Section, not the Expanded Kasilof Section) from 12:00 p.m. noon until 8:00 p.m. on Wednesday, July 8, 2020.

For this open period set gillnet gear restrictions in the Upper Subdistrict will be changed.

As announced in UCI Commercial Fishing Announcement No. 4, gear restrictions are in place for all Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishermen from the beginning of the season through July 31, 2020. During the July 8 fishing period in the Kasilof Section of the Upper Subdistrict, legal gear is restricted to no more than two set gillnets per permit that are each not more than 35 fathoms in length and 29 meshes in depth or no more than one set gillnet per permit that is not more than 35 fathoms in length and 45 meshes in depth. As a reminder, any set gillnet that is not more than 29 meshes in depth as part of this restrictive provision must be identified at the end of the gillnet with an attached blue buoy that is not less than nine and one-half inches in diameter.

This announcement also opens commercial salmon fishing with set gillnets (see below additional set gillnet gear restriction) from 12:00 p.m. noon until 8:00 p.m. on Wednesday, July 8, 2020 within 600 feet of the mean high tide mark in that portion of the Kenai Section north of the latitude of the Blanchard Line (60° 27.10' N. lat.) and south of the latitude of the ADF&G regulatory marker (60° 30.49' N. lat.) located south of the Kenai River mouth; i.e., the North Kalifornsky Beach statistical area (244-32).

Following 5 AAC 21.310 (b)(2)(C)(ii), and UCI Commercial Fishing Announcement #4, during the July 8 opening in the North Kalifornsky Beach statistical area, legal gear is restricted to set gillnets that are no greater than 29 meshes in depth and with mesh sizes no greater than four and three quarters inches. Up to 4 set gillnets per permit may be used, each no greater than 35 fathoms in length, and 105 fathoms in aggregate length. No set gillnets greater than 29 meshes in depth may be used in the North Kalifornsky beach statistical area during this opening.

As of July 6, the Kasilof River sockeye salmon run is 31% complete based on average run timing and projects a final escapement of more than 440,000 fish. The minimum biological escapement goal (BEG) for Kasilof River sockeye salmon of 140,000 has been achieved. Both Kenai River late-run large king and late-run sockeye salmon runs are too early in the season to project final escapement with a high degree of accuracy. Therefore, the additional fishing time provided in this announcement is intended to harvest sockeye salmon returning to the Kasilof River while minimizing harvest of Kenai River king and sockeye salmon until the abundance of these stocks can be projected with more certainty.

5 AAC 21.359(e)(3)(B) *Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan* restricts the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery to no more than 36 hours per week, with a 36-hour continuous closure per week beginning between 7:00 p.m. Thursday and 7:00 a.m. Friday. With regularly scheduled fishing periods on Mondays and Thursdays no longer in effect in the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery, any and all fishing time may occur only via EO. With this fishing announcement, 21 hours of EO time will have been used for the week of July 5–July 11.

Fish harvested in the Kasilof Section set gillnet fishery during this fishing period should be reported in statistical areas 244-21, 244-22, or 244-31 (for a description of these statistical areas, please see UCI Commercial Fishing Announcement No. 5). Fish harvested in the drift gillnet fishery during this fishing period should be reported in statistical areas 244-61. Fish harvested in the North Kalifornsky Beach statistical area should be reported in statistical area 244-32.

COVID-19

Under Alaska's Health Mandates 10, 17, and 18, commercial fishing is an Essential Business and is part of Alaska's Essential Services and Critical Infrastructure. Commercial fishermen should ensure that all travel and other activities in support of commercial fishing operations follow protocols in Alaska COVID-19 Health Mandates. COVID-19 Health Mandates may be found here: <https://gov.alaska.gov/home/covid19-healthmandates/>