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Advisory Announcement
For Immediate Release: July 22, 2020

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UPPER COOK INLET COMMERCIAL FISHING ANNOUNCEMENT No. 23

Upper Cook Inlet Commercial Fishing Announcement No. 23 closes commercial salmon fishing with set gillnet gear in the Kenai, Kasilof, and East Forelands Sections of the Upper Subdistrict until further notice. Consistent with 5 AAC 21.359 (d)(3) *Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan* and 5 AAC 21.310 (b)(3) *Fishing Seasons*, commercial salmon fishing with drift gillnet gear is closed within one mile of the Kenai Peninsula shoreline north of the Kenai River and within one and one-half miles of the Kenai Peninsula shoreline south of the Kenai River until further notice.

On July 22, the Division of Sport Fish issued Emergency Order (EO) 2KS-1-41-20 closing the Kenai River drainage to fishing for king salmon effective 12:01 a.m. Friday, July 24, 2020. The marine sport fishery is also being closed (EO # 2KS-1-42-20). In compliance with the *Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan*, the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery will also be closed.

If the projected late-run large king salmon escapement is less than 15,000 fish, 5 AAC 21.359(d)(3) *Kenai River Late-Run King Management Plan* states, the department shall close the commercial set gillnet fishery in the Upper Subdistrict. As of July 21, 2020, Kenai River late-run large king salmon passage was estimated to be 4,520 fish and projected a final escapement of less than 15,000. Inseason projections show all indices of abundance remain well below their respective minimum inseason management objectives. At this time, it does not appear that the late-run will attain adequate escapement without significant restrictions to all fisheries that harvest this stock.

Effective, Thursday, July 23, 2020 at 12:01 a.m., no commercial set gillnet fishing periods will be allowed in the Upper Subdistrict of the Central District of Upper Cook Inlet unless changed by subsequent EO. All other set gillnet fisheries in Upper Cook Inlet are not affected by this announcement.

The department will monitor escapement of king salmon in the Kenai River and future openings may occur if the OEG is projected to be achieved in 2020.

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/>