

# SPORT FISHING

## *Emergency Order*

ALASKA DEPARTMENT  
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 3-KS-01-15

Issued at: Fairbanks, Monday, March 23, 2015

Effective Date: 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, April 1, 2015

Expiration Date: 11:59 p.m. Saturday,  
July 25, 2015, unless superseded by  
subsequent emergency order.

### EXPLANATION:

This emergency order closes all waters of the Kuskokwim-Goodnews Area to sport fishing for king salmon, effective 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, April 1, 2015. In addition, only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used in the Kuskokwim-Goodnews Area.

All king salmon caught unintentionally in the Kuskokwim-Goodnews Area while fishing for other species may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately.

### REGULATION:

The provisions of 5 AAC 71.010. Seasons and bag, possession, and size limits for the Kuskokwim-Goodnews Area. (b)(1), (c)(1)(A) and (c)(3)(A) are superseded and (d)(1)(G) is added by this emergency order. Under this emergency order, the following provisions are effective, beginning 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, April 1, 2015, through 11:59 p.m. Saturday, July 25, 2015:

#### **5 AAC 71.010. Seasons and bag, possession, and size limits for the Kuskokwim-Goodnews Area.**

(b)(1) sport fishing for king salmon is closed; king salmon may not be taken or possessed.

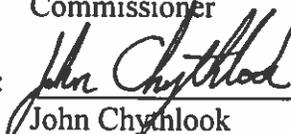
(c)(1)(A) sport fishing for king salmon is closed; king salmon may not be taken or possessed.

(c)(3)(A) sport fishing for king salmon is closed; king salmon may not be taken or possessed.

(d)(1)(G) only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used in the remainder of the Kuskokwim-Goodnews Area not specified in (d)(1)(A-F).

Sam Cotten  
Commissioner

by delegation to:

  
John Chynlook

Area Management Biologist

JUSTIFICATION:

King salmon stocks throughout western Alaska are experiencing a period of low productivity and, since 2010 below average run strength. Preseason projections suggest that the Kuskokwim River king salmon run in 2015 may be below average, similar to 2014 when the Kuskokwim River experienced an estimated total run of approximately 130,000 and spawning escapement of approximately 118,000 fish. In 2014, the drainagewide escapement goal was achieved through prolonged restrictions to the subsistence king salmon fishery, no commercial fishing during the king salmon run, and closure of the king salmon sport fishery. Most king salmon stocks assessed in the Kuskokwim River drainage have not achieved associated sustainable escapement goals (SEG) in recent years. Restrictions to the Kuskokwim River subsistence king salmon fishery are expected in 2015.

In 2013 and 2014, king salmon escapements in the Kanektok and Goodnews rivers, the primary Kuskokwim Bay stocks, were below average and also failed to achieve established escapement goals. An aerial survey count on the Kanektok River in 2014 did not achieve the king salmon SEG (range 3,500-8000), with 1,871 fish observed. The king salmon biological escapement goal (BEG) of 1,500-2,900 Goodnews River was also not met, with an estimated 750 fish. Restrictions to the commercial and subsistence fisheries of Kuskokwim Bay are planned in 2015. These actions will be implemented in conjunction with actions in the sport fishery; all are necessary to ensure king salmon escapement goals are met.

The projected poor king salmon runs and recent failures to meet escapement goals in the Kuskokwim-Goodnews Area warrant closing the entire Kuskokwim-Goodnews Area to sport fishing for king salmon and the prohibiting the use of bait and multiple hooks.

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) 459-7207.