

SPORT FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 3-KS-Y-1-2024

Issued at: Fairbanks, Tuesday, March 19, 2024

Effective Date: 12:01 a.m. Thursday, March 21, 2024

Expiration Date: 11:59 p.m. Monday, September 30, 2024, unless superseded by subsequent emergency order.

EXPLANATION:

This emergency order closes all waters of the Yukon River drainage (excluding the Tanana River drainage) to sport fishing for king salmon. In addition, the use of bait is prohibited in all Yukon River tributaries (excluding the Tanana River drainage).

All king salmon caught incidentally in the Yukon River drainage (excluding the Tanana River drainage) while fishing for other species may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately.

REGULATION:

The provisions of 5 AAC 73.010(b)(1) are superseded and 5 AAC 73.010(d)(3) are added by this emergency order. Under this emergency order, the following provisions are effective 12:01 a.m. Thursday, March 21 through 11:59 p.m. Monday, September 30, 2024:

5 AAC 73.010. Seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Yukon River Area.

(b)(1) sport fishing for king salmon is closed; king salmon may not be taken or possessed; king salmon caught must be released immediately; a person may not remove a king salmon from the water before releasing the fish;

(d) In the Yukon River Area, the following special provisions to methods and means apply:

(3) in all Yukon River tributaries, the use of bait is prohibited.

Douglas Vincent-Lang
Commissioner



by delegation to:

Lisa Stuby
Area Management Biologist

JUSTIFICATION:

King salmon stocks in the Yukon River drainage continue to experience historically low productivity for both Canadian and U.S. stocks. Approximately 40-50% of Yukon River king salmon spawn in Canada and these fish are managed through the *Yukon River Salmon Agreement*, which requires a minimum number of fish to cross into Canada for harvest and spawning escapement. The minimum number, which was 42,500 king salmon, has not been met since 2019. Border passage in 2022 and 2023 was only 12,025 and 14,752 king salmon, respectively, and were the lowest on record. The 2024 king salmon run is anticipated to fall below treaty obligations, is not expected to meet Alaskan escapement goals, nor provide for Alaskan subsistence opportunity. Therefore, a preseason closure of sport fishing for king salmon in the Yukon River drainage is warranted.

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.