

PERSONAL USE

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 3-RS-I-11-26

Issued at: Glennallen, Wednesday,
June 24, 2026

Effective Date: 12:01 a.m. Friday, July 3, 2026

Expiration Date: 11:59 p.m. August 31,
2026, unless superseded by subsequent
emergency order.

EXPLANATION:

This emergency order amends the schedule for the Chitina Subdistrict personal use dip net salmon fishery for the week of June 29 – July 5, 2026.

In addition, this emergency order closes the Chitina Subdistrict personal use dip net salmon fishery to the retention of king salmon for the season. King salmon incidentally caught may not be retained and must be released immediately.

REGULATION:

Consistent with 5 AAC 77.001(b) and 5 AAC 77.591 *Copper River Personal Use Dip Net Salmon Fishery Management Plan*, the personal use dip net salmon fishery in the Chitina Subdistrict of the Upper Copper River District will be open for a 72-hour period from 12:01 a.m. Friday, July 3 through 11:59 p.m. Sunday, July 5.

In addition, the provisions of 5 AAC 24.361(d)(1) and 5 AAC 77.591(e) are superseded by this emergency order effective 12:01 a.m. Friday, July 3, 2026:

5 AAC 24.361. Copper River King Salmon Management Plan.

(d)(1) king salmon may not be retained or possessed; all king salmon caught must be released immediately

5 AAC 77.591. Copper River Personal Use Dip Net Salmon Fishery Management Plan.

(e) The total annual limit for each personal use salmon fishing permit is 25 salmon for the head of household and 10 salmon for each dependent of the permit holder, except that king salmon may not be retained or possessed; king salmon caught must be released immediately.

Douglas Vincent-Lang
Commissioner



By delegation to: _____

Tracy R. Hansen
Area Management Biologist

JUSTIFICATION:

The Copper River personal use fishery is managed under direction of the Copper River Personal Use Dip Net Salmon Fishery Management Plan (5 AAC 77.591). The plan establishes the season from June 10

through September 30 and directs the department to establish weekly periods based on Miles Lake sonar counts. During June 15–21, there were 62,157 salmon counted past the Miles Lake sonar. The preseason projection for this period was 73,399 salmon, which results in a deficit of 11,242 salmon. Copper River sockeye salmon migratory timing, and the previous three-year average harvest and participation rates, indicate sufficient numbers of salmon to allow 96 hours of fishing time during the week of June 29 – July 5. However, as of June 21, total salmon passage past the Miles Lake sonar this season is approximately 81,000 salmon behind the objective for this date. Through June 21, a total of 257,451 salmon have been counted, whereas the preseason projection for this date is 338,285 salmon. Due to low overall salmon passage and concerns that the sockeye salmon escapement goal may not be achieved, additional conservation measures are needed. Therefore, an additional reduction from the fishing time normally calculated based on weekly sonar passage is warranted. As a result, the Chitina Subdistrict personal use dip net fishery will be open for 72 hours during the week of June 29 – July 5.

The *Copper River King Salmon Fishery Management Plan* (5 AAC 24.361) directs the department to manage the Copper River fisheries to achieve a sustainable escapement goal of 21,000–31,000 king salmon. The 2026 king salmon run to the Copper River appears to be weak. As of June 20, a total of 15,243 large king salmon have been counted past the Miles Lake sonar. This is the lowest, large king salmon cumulative count on record for this date since species apportionment at the sonar project began in 2019. The Native Village of Eyak (NVE) fish wheel capture rates at Baird Canyon and fish wheel recapture rates at Canyon Creek also indicate low abundance. Therefore, closing king salmon to retention in the personal use fishery is required to help ensure the spawning escapement goal is achieved.

DISTRIBUTION:

The distribution list for this emergency order is on file at the Region 3 Office of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish, 1300 College Road, Fairbanks, AK 99701, (907) 459-7357, and the Glennallen Area Office of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish, PO Box 47, Glennallen, AK 99588, (907) 822-3309.