



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Bureau of Land Management  
National Park Service  
Bureau of Indian Affairs

## Federal Subsistence Board

1101 E Tudor Rd, MS 121  
Anchorage Alaska 99503



Forest Service

# SUBSISTENCE FISHING

## SPECIAL ACTION

Under Authority of 50 CFR Part 100.10 and .19  
36 CFR Part 242.10 and .19

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Special Action No.: 3-KS-03-15 Issued at: Bethel, Alaska  
May 24, 2015

Effective Date: May 28, 2015 6:00 a.m.

Expiration Date: July 20, 2015 5:59 am. Unless superseded by subsequent Special Action

### EXPLANATION:

#### **Kuskokwim River Mouth to Aniak**

This Emergency Special Action closes Chinook salmon fishing to all user groups on the Kuskokwim River and its salmon tributaries within the boundaries of Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge. This action follows the conservation strategy discussed with the members of local Tribes, the public, the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group, and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) over the previous 10 months.

### REGULATION

50 CFR 100.27(e)(4)(ii) is amended to add:

#### ***Unless superseded by subsequent Special Action***

*Effective 6:00 a.m., Thursday, May 28, 2015, Chinook salmon fishing is closed to all user groups. This closure is located on the Kuskokwim River and its salmon tributaries in and adjacent to the boundaries of Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge. The lower Refuge boundary is a line from the west to the east bank of the Kuskokwim River located at the Kuskokwim River mouth. This boundary begins at a point on the west bank of the Kuskokwim River beginning at Latitude 59.999231°, Longitude -162.507352° and ends at a point on the East bank of the Kuskokwim River at Latitude 59.999238°, Longitude -162.187927°. The upper Refuge boundary is a line from the north to the south bank of the Kuskokwim River immediately up river of Aniak. This boundary line begins at a point on the north bank of the Kuskokwim River at Latitude 61.588463°, Longitude -159.517392 and ends at a point on the south bank of the Kuskokwim River at Latitude 61.574033°, Longitude -159.517396°. Salmon tributaries*

*include the Eek, Kwethluk, Kasigluk, Kisaralik, Tuluksak, and Aniak Rivers and their salmon tributaries. In the Kuskokwim River and its salmon tributaries, non-salmon species may be targeted using set gill nets that are restricted to four-inch or less mesh, not exceeding 60-feet in length, and 45 meshes in depth; this gill net opportunity is only allowed for 72 hours each week from 6:00 a.m. Thursday through 6:00 a.m. Sunday. Chinook salmon harvested incidentally in these gill net openings may be retained. There are no gill net restrictions 100 yards upriver of non-salmon tributaries. Chinook salmon incidentally harvested with all other legal gear types must be immediately released.*

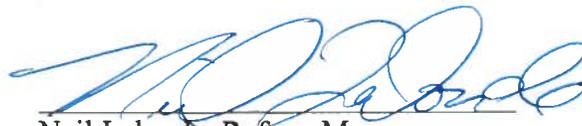
## JUSTIFICATION

### *Biological*

Due to the low Chinook salmon returns for the last several years and the failure to meet escapement goals at two of three weir projects in 2014, conservation measures are warranted in 2015. The 2014 State of Alaska Chinook salmon drainage-wide return was estimated at 136,000 fish, well below the annual average of 243,000 fish over the last 25 years. The subsistence harvest in 2014 was estimated to be 12,000 Chinook salmon, a historically low harvest. The escapement for 2014 was estimated at 124,000 Chinook salmon drainage-wide. The State of Alaska drainage-wide escapement goal is 65,000–120,000 Chinook salmon, and the 2015 return is forecasted to be between 96,000 and 163,000 Chinook salmon. At the upper end of that range, there would be enough fish to meet escapement goals and provide for a moderate Chinook salmon subsistence harvest. At the lower end of the projected run, however, even a very limited subsistence harvest could impact the likelihood of achieving escapement goals.

## FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE BOARD

By delegation to:

  
Neil Lalonde, Refuge Manager  
Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge

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