



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

Special Action No.:	3-KS-03-16	Issued at:	Bethel, Alaska June 10, 2016
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Effective Date: June 12, 2016 12:01 p.m. (noon)

Expiration Date: August 11, 2016 11:59 a.m. (noon) Unless superseded by subsequent Federal Special Action

EXPLANATION:

Restriction on the use of gillnets for the Eek, Kwethluk, Kasigluk, Kisaralik, Tuluksak, and Aniak Rivers in the Kuskokwim River Drainage

This Special Action restricts the use of gillnets on the Eek, Kwethluk, Kasigluk, Kisaralik, Tuluksak, and Aniak rivers as well as on their salmon tributaries within the boundaries of Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge.

REGULATION

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

Effective 12:01 p.m., Sunday, June 12, 2016, all gill nets are prohibited on the Eek, Kwethluk, Kasigluk, Kisaralik, Tuluksak and Aniak rivers and their salmon tributaries within the boundaries of Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge. Non-salmon tributaries of these rivers including Birch Creek, Akulikutak River, Columbia Creek, Little Bogus Creek and Reindeer Slough are excluded 100-yards upstream from their confluence with the salmon tributaries from this closure.

JUSTIFICATION

This closure is due to the low Kuskokwim River Chinook salmon returns over the last several years. While escapement goals at met these weir projects in 2015, conservation measures are warranted in the 2016 season to aid in the recovery of these stocks. The 2016 Chinook salmon drainage-wide return was estimated at 172,000 fish, which was below the annual average of 243,000 fish over the last 25 years. The rivers and tributaries identified in this Emergency Special Action have experienced particularly poor Chinook salmon returns since 2008. Chinook salmon returns in the Kwethluk River have fallen below the lower bound of the escapement goal in six of the last seven years, and escapement in the Aniak, Kisaralik and Tuluksak rivers has been far below average. The Eek River is closed as a salmon spawning stream to conserve salmon going upstream to spawn. Even a very limited subsistence harvest could impact the likelihood of achieving sufficient escapement; therefore, the tributary-specific restrictions are necessary for the conservation of healthy populations of Chinook salmon and the continuation of subsistence uses of those populations.

Consultation with the Kuskokwim Inter-Tribal Fish Commission on June 8, 2016 resulted in a motion and consensus on closing the salmon spawning tributaries to the use of gillnets for the season. The tributary closure will allow for escapement of salmon to spawn in these critical tributaries.

FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE BOARD

By delegation to:



Vernon Ray Born, Acting Refuge Manager
Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge

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