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Federal Subsistence Board News Release



Forest Service

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Federal Subsistence Board Approves Changes to 2017 Kenai River Federal Subsistence Community Gillnet Fishery

The Federal Subsistence Board (Board) has approved Temporary Special Action Request FSA17-01, providing for implementation of the Kenai River community gillnet fishery in Federal public waters of the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge in 2017 for residents of the community of Ninilchik. The Board believes that these temporary regulatory changes will provide residents of the community of Ninilchik with the Federal subsistence harvest opportunity that was authorized in 2015, while at the same time addressing concerns raised by other communities about the potential impacts of the community gillnet fishery on their subsistence opportunity and providing protections for Chinook Salmon, Rainbow Trout, and Dolly Varden stocks.

Approval of FSA17-01 results in the following changes to the Kenai River community gillnet fishery for the 2017 season:

- The Kenai River annual total harvest limits for late-run Chinook Salmon, Sockeye Salmon, Coho Salmon, and Pink Salmon will no longer apply to this fishery, and it will instead be managed by household limits and other caps set forth in by this special action.
- An early-run Chinook Salmon season, specific to this community gillnet fishery, will be established from July 1 to July 15.
- An early-run Chinook Salmon household limit will be established, specific to this community gillnet fishery, of two fish per household and one additional fish for each household member.
- Up to 50 early-run Chinook Salmon (less than 46 inches in length or greater than 55 inches in length) may be retained if the ADF&G Optimal Escapement Goal has been met, otherwise those fish must be released alive.
- The community gillnet fishery will close until July 16 once 50 early-run Chinook Salmon have been retained or released.
- Up to 200 late-run Chinook Salmon may be retained in the community gillnet fishery between July 16 and August 15.
- The community gillnet fishery will close prior to August 15 if 200 late-run Chinook Salmon are retained or released prior to then. The fishery will reopen September 10-30.
- Rainbow Trout and Dolly Varden caught in the net must be released alive, except that those that have died in the net may be retained.

- The community gillnet fishery will close for the season once 100 Rainbow Trout or 150 Dolly Varden have been released or retained.
- All incidental fish mortalities, regardless of species or length, may be retained; however, retention counts towards released or retained totals specified in this special action except for Chinook Salmon less than 20 inches in length.
- Alaska Department of Fish and Game sport fishing seasonal river bank closures, as adopted into Federal Subsistence Regulations, will not apply to the community gillnet fishery.

This Temporary Special Action will expire upon conclusion of the season for the Kenai River community gillnet fishery or upon reaching any of the closure triggers described above.

Additional information on the Federal Subsistence Management Program may be found on the web at www.doi.gov/subsistence or by visiting www.facebook.com/subsistencealaska.

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