



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

Federal Subsistence Board

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Forest Service

SUBSISTENCE FISHING CLOSURE IN WOMENS BAY TO CONSERVE BUSKIN RIVER ORIGIN SOCKEYE SALMON

EMERGENCY SPECIAL ACTION

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

Emergency Special Action No: 9-RS-01-22

Issued at: Kodiak, Alaska, June 9, 2022

Effective Date: 12:01 a.m. Saturday, June 11, 2022

Expiration Date 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, August 10, 2022 unless superseded by subsequent special action.

EXPLANATION: This Emergency Special Action closes the take of Sockeye Salmon to all users in the Federal public waters of Womens Bay near the city of Kodiak, which includes all Federal public waters of Chiniak Bay west of a line from Cliff Point (57° 43.51' N. latitude, 152° 26.60' W. longitude) to a point near Gibson Cove (57° 46.62' N. latitude, 152° 26.80' W. longitude).

The Kodiak Area Federal Subsistence In-season Manager, under the authority delegated by the Federal Subsistence Board, has been collaborating with Regional Advisory Council representatives and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) Commercial Fisheries Manager about the extremely low number of Sockeye Salmon returning to Buskin River. Only 769 Sockeye Salmon have passed the weir as of June 8, while the 10-year average for this date is 1,600. Additionally, few fish have been observed in the river. It is unlikely, based on the current rate of escapement, that the lower value (5,000) of the escapement goal for Buskin River Sockeye Salmon will be achieved.

The State managed commercial, subsistence, and sport fisheries targeting Buskin River origin Sockeye Salmon in this area are being closed by ADF&G (Emergency Order #4-FS-K-Sub-02-22 and 2-RS-4-27-22).

In an effort to conserve Buskin River Sockeye Salmon, and in coordination with ADF&G, the Federal public waters of Womens Bay are being closed to fishing for Sockeye Salmon for all users. All Sockeye Salmon incidentally caught by all users in any gear type must be immediately released to the water unharmed.

REGULATION: 36 CFR 242.27(e)(9)(v)(A) and 50 CFR 100.27(e)(9)(v)(A) are amended to read:

In the Federal public waters of Kodiak Island, east of the line from Crag Point south to the westernmost point of Sallery Cove, including the waters of Woody and Long Islands, and the salt waters bordering this area within 1 mile of Kodiak Island, excluding the waters bordering Spruce Island, 25 salmon for the permit holder plus an additional 25 salmon for each member of the same household whose names are listed on the permit: an additional permit may be obtained upon request.

Federal public waters of Chiniak Bay west of a line from Cliff Point (57° 43.51' N. latitude, 152° 26.60' W. longitude) to a point near Gibson Cove (57° 46.62' N. latitude, 152° 26.80' W. longitude) are closed to the take of Sockeye Salmon by all users; effective from 12:01 a.m. Saturday, June 11 to 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, August 10, unless superseded by a subsequent Federal special action.

JUSTIFICATION: As of June 8th, 769 Sockeye Salmon have migrated upstream past the ADF&G Buskin weir counting station, while the desired escapement target is a range from 5,000 to 8,000 fish. It is unlikely, based upon the current rate of escapement, that the lower range of the escapement goal for Buskin Lake Sockeye Salmon (5,000) will be achieved. The Kodiak Area Federal Subsistence In-season Manager has determined this closure is warranted under Title VIII of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA). ANILCA Section §816 states that Federal subsistence fisheries shall be restricted or closed to all users to protect the viability of a population. Closing the identified marine waters under Federal subsistence fisheries jurisdiction to Sockeye Salmon fishing is necessary to protect the few Sockeye Salmon potentially migrating to the Buskin River. The 2022 Buskin River Sockeye Salmon return is critically low and likely cannot withstand any harvest mortality within the defined area.

These actions, in alignment with State closures to commercial, subsistence, and sport harvest of salmon in the area, will ensure that Buskin drainage Sockeye Salmon have the best chances for achieving their escapement goals this year and will reduce regulatory complexity. The Federally managed subsistence fishery for Sockeye Salmon may be re-opened before the expiration of this emergency special action should Sockeye Salmon counts at the Buskin River weir increase enough to ensure achievement of the escapement goal.

By delegation from the Federal Subsistence Board:





Natalie Fath
Acting Refuge Manager
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge
June 9, 2022

DISTRIBUTION: Local radio station, Kodiak Daily Mirror, ADF&G Sport and Commercial Fishery Divisions, Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Afognak Native Corp., Kodiak/Aleutians Regional Advisory Council, Kodiak ADF&G Advisory Committee, Federal Subsistence Board, Alaska Board of Fisheries, Federal and State enforcement personnel.

Map 1 - Womens Bay Area

Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge Kodiak Management Area

-  Federal Subsistence Marine Fisheries Jurisdiction
-  Subsistence Salmon Closed Area

Map data for Alaska Maritime NWR provided by the USFWS Division of Realty, May 2003. Contact Refuge Manager at Kodiak NWR, phone 487-2600, for questions on inseason fisheries management.

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