



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-01-21

Issued at: Kodiak, Alaska, June 14, 2021

Effective Date: 12:01 a.m. Tuesday, June 15

Expiration Date 12:01 a.m. Saturday, August 14 unless superseded by subsequent special action.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 114 Sockeye Salmon have passed the weir as of June 10th. 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.

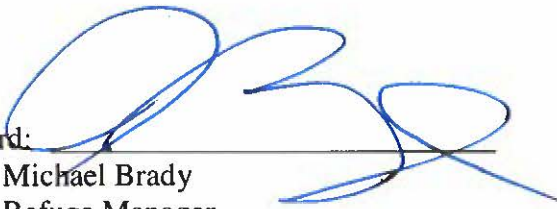
The commercial and sport fisheries targeting Buskin River origin Sockeye Salmon in this area are also being closed by the ADF&G (Emergency Order #4-K-Sub-02-21).

In an effort to conserve Buskin River Sockeye Salmon, and in concurrence with ADF&G, the Federal public waters of Womens Bay are being closed to fishing for Sockeye salmon for all users.

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

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. Tuesday, June 15 to 12:01 a.m. Saturday August 14, unless superseded by a subsequent Federal special action.

By delegation from the Federal Subsistence Board:



Michael Brady
Refuge Manager
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge
June 14, 2021

JUSTIFICATION: As of June 10th, approximately 114 Sockeye Salmon have migrated upstream past the ADF&G Buskin weir counting station, while the desired escapement target is a range from 5000 to 8000 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 Section §816 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 2021 Buskin River Sockeye Salmon return is critically low and likely cannot withstand any harvest mortality within the defined area.

In an effort to conserve Buskin Lake Sockeye Salmon, the ADF&G has prohibited commercial and subsistence salmon harvest in the marine waters adjacent to the Buskin River drainage. In response to the low level of salmon escapement, ADF&G also has restricted the sport fishery in the Buskin drainage. Collectively, these Federal and State fishery management actions will ensure that Sockeye Salmon approaching and entering the Buskin River drainage have sufficient opportunity to reach their spawning grounds.

ADF&G will continue to monitor Sockeye Salmon escapement into Buskin River on a daily basis. The Federally managed subsistence fishery for Sockeye Salmon may be re-opened before the expiration of this emergency special action should Sockeye Salmon counts increase enough to ensure achievement of the escapement goal.

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.