



Federal Subsistence Board News Release



For Immediate Release:
April 7, 2026

Contact Information:
holly_carroll@fws.gov
(907) 351-3029

2026 Public Hearing to Discuss Subsistence Fishery Temporary Special Actions for the Yukon Area

ANCHORAGE, Alaska – The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Federal in-season manager is offering a public hearing to discuss proposed management actions to protect Yukon River drainage salmon, which includes temporary special actions. Please call in to get information and share your comments or concerns. See below for a summary of planned management actions.

PUBLIC HEARING BY TELECONFERENCE:

Tuesday, April 28, 2026, 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. (or until conclusion of public comments).

(833) 436-1163 Passcode: 199713149#

You can also join via a Microsoft Teams link by clicking here:

[Join the meeting now](#)

The **2026 Yukon River salmon outlooks** indicate closures are necessary for all salmon species:

- **Chinook salmon** are projected to be about **64,300 fish**, with only 27,000 being Canadian-origin fish. This is well below the Canadian border objective of 71,000.
- **Summer chum salmon** are projected to be about **345,600 fish** which would be well below the drainage-wide escapement goal (500,000–1.2 million).
- **Fall chum salmon** are projected to be about **311,000 fish** which would be near or below the drainage-wide escapement goal (300,000–600,000). The Canadian-origin component is estimated at 31,000 fish, well below the border objective (70,000–104,000), and Fishing Branch River returns are estimated at 12,000 fish, below the escapement goal (22,000–49,000). We do have to take a conservative approach to these projections because these returns are coming off record low parent year escapements.
- **Coho salmon** are expected to be **below average**, and harvest restrictions will be necessary at the start of the fall season.

Proposed Federal Management Actions for 2026 include:

- **Summer season closures** for Chinook and summer chum beginning on June 1 for all users in the lower river, progressing upriver based on run timing and in-season assessment.
- **Fall season closures** for fall chum and coho beginning on July 13 for all users in the lower river, with restrictions likely extending into October depending on in-season run strength. Some key spawning tributaries may remain closed through December.
- **Chum or coho harvest** may be allowed if a harvestable surplus above escapement goals develops based on in-season run strength; however, chum harvest is unlikely given historically low parent-year runs. Coho selective gear harvest is more likely.
- **Limit subsistence salmon harvest to federally qualified subsistence users (FQSUs)** in Federal public waters if any chum or coho salmon harvest is supported by in-season assessment. Pink

salmon, sockeye salmon, and non-salmon harvests are not limited to FQSUs.

- **Non-salmon fishing opportunities:**

- Fishing for non-salmon species with selective gear such as dip nets, hook and line, and beach seines will be open all season. We will require live release of salmon with harvest closures.
- **4-inch or smaller mesh gillnets to target non-salmon fish** will be restricted to 60 feet in length and operated as a set net to reduce incidental salmon harvest. Non-salmon fishing with 4-inch gear will be closed for a 2.5-week period during peak Chinook passage in each area. In the fall, a weekly schedule will be in place to ensure periods when gillnets are fully out of the river during salmon migration.
- **6-inch or smaller mesh gillnets to target non-salmon fish** will be allowed at the start of the fall season, in designated whitefish harvest areas where salmon are not expected to be present.

Background:

The USFWS Federal in-season manager plans to uphold conservation and subsistence priority provisions of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (Title VIII), as well as the Yukon River Salmon Agreement, through Federal management actions during the 2026 Yukon River salmon season. These actions may include salmon harvest closures for all users, limiting salmon harvest opportunities to FQSUs only, and setting fishing schedules, openings, closures, and allowable gear under delegated authority. These actions will be coordinated regularly with Yukon Area management staff at the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, the Chairs of the local Regional Advisory Councils, and the Office of Subsistence Management, and messaging will be aligned to provide clear guidance to fishermen.

The Yukon fishery management team believes these proposed actions meet salmon conservation needs. A public hearing is being held to gather additional input. Tribal Governments and ANCSA corporations may request Government-to-Government consultation.

For more information:

Please contact keith_herron@fws.gov | 907-334-5391

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

Missing out on the latest federal subsistence issues? To receive emails updates on Federal Subsistence Management Program activities, send a request to subsistence@ios.doi.gov.

-###-