



YUKON RIVER DRAINAGE FISHERIES ASSOCIATION

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Greetings from the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association!

June 7, 2016

Here is a summary of the Yukon River Salmon In-Season Management Teleconference #1 held Tuesday, June 7, 2016. The toll free number is 1-800-315-6338 and the code is YUKON# (98566#).

Background: Yukon River salmon management teleconferences are held annually every Tuesday in June, July, and August for managers and fishers throughout the Yukon River drainage to discuss fishing conditions and management strategies in real time as the salmon run is occurring. *The Teleconferences are funded by the Federal Office of Subsistence Management and the Yukon River Panel.*

Communities participating this week: **In Alaska:** Hooper Bay, Nunam Iqua, Alakanuk, Pitkas Point, Saint Mary's, Marshall, Russian Mission, Holy Cross, Shageluk, Anvik, Kaltag, Nulato, Koyukuk, Huslia, Allakaket, Tanana, Fort Yukon, Venetie, Nenana. **In YT Canada:** Dawson-Tr'ondek Hwech'in

Yukon River Subsistence Reports: Alaska

Hopper Bay- very few fish so far, winds right-perhaps too warm? A few boats at head of the bay, maybe somehow blocking?

Nunam Iqua- water high a few dipnetting-catching only a few fish.

Alakanuk- Detailed fishing report from YR DFA surveyor-some summer chum and a few kings caught. Numerous complaints per-early fishing closure before 1st pulse arrives.

Pitkas Point-Fishing slow, waiting for fuller run.

St. Mary's-things slow, gear switch from gill to dip-netting per early closure, most folks waiting till run strengthens. Complaints about early closing.

Marshall-YR DFA surveyor: fishing slow-a few sheefish, chum and kings caught, water down a foot from last week but still high, dip nets working better at 15' depth. Is there a regulation on how deep you can fish with dipnets?

Russian Mission-water level average to high. Closures too early, no fish caught prior to. Fires 15 miles from village on north bank, very smoky.

Holy Cross-Early openings closed a few kings caught prior.

Shageluk-Listening in

Anvik-High water preventing folks from getting to set-net sites. A few folks catching chum, sheefish. Folks getting up smoke-house wood.

Kaltag-water a bit high, no fishing yet, folks preparing for runs.

Nulato-water a bit high-dropping now, a little drift, few fish being caught.

Koyukuk-water level normal-calm, no fishing yet. Downriver folks should be on the look-out for the body of a lost snow-machine driver from last winter.

Huslia-water slowly dropping, one fisher with net out yesterday-caught pike, sheefish, whitefish.

Allakaket-water dropping, some fishing for pike, folks waiting for salmon, folks not too excited-will they be able to fish for kings?

Tanana-No drift, a few fishing on whitefish.

Fort Yukon-a few folks fishing for whitefish.

Venetie-water going down, no fishing.

Nenana-water coming up-rain up river?, small amount of debris. One big whitefish in the pot.

Yukon River Subsistence Reports: Yukon Territory, Canada

Dawson-Tr'ondek Hwech'in-water high with debris. No fishing. First Nation has signed a no Chinook harvest resolution for this season.

Fisheries management from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game:

For Alaskan management regulation announcements, news releases and most current updates for the fishing season, please visit on the web:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.main> or call toll-free 1-866-479-7387 for recorded fishing schedules and assessment information.

For Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Canada updates, please visit:

<http://www-ops2.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fns-sap/index-eng.cfm>
or call toll-free 604-666-2828 or 866-431-3474 for recorded fishing schedules and information.

For further information, please contact the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association at 907-272-3141 or look for us on the web at www.yukonsalmon.org.

Please join us on the next teleconference, Tuesday at 1 p.m. Alaska time (2 p.m. Yukon time) and THANK YOU! For participating!

Wayne Jenkins
YRDFA Director



**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES
NEWS RELEASE**



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**2016 Yukon River Summer Salmon Fishery News Release # 10
Summer Update # 3, Yukon Area Salmon Fishery
Districts Affected: Yukon Area**

Assessment

The 2016 salmon season is underway on the Yukon River. Based on above average temperatures and early ice out, the Chinook salmon run is predicted to be early this year. While we have encountered Chinook salmon early this season, it still remains to be seen if the run will come in early or if it will track closer to average like it did in 2015. The first summer chum and Chinook salmon were caught in the Lower Yukon Test Fishery (LYTF) on May 22 and May 24, respectively. Catch per Unit Effort (CPUE) at the LYTF set gillnet sites is matching up well with Chinook salmon passage at the sonar near Pilot Station indicating that our test fishery is operating well. Catch rates have been relatively low for both Chinook and summer chum salmon in the LYTF; however, the early trickle of Chinook salmon passed by the sonar near Pilot Station in strong numbers relative to the early fish observed during previous years. Chinook and summer chum salmon passage estimates are also beginning to build at the sonar near Pilot Station. Based on historical migration timing, the first summer chum salmon should be between Grayling and Kaltag and the first Chinook salmon should be approaching Koyukuk.

The department would like to extend gratitude to the lower Yukon River subsistence fishermen who have shared harvest information. These reports are instrumental in directing management actions during the early part of the season. The department is reminding fishermen to track their harvest on their subsistence calendars and encourages them to continue calling the ADF&G office to provide harvest reports.

Fishermen are also reminded that the Yukon River Inseason Salmon Management Teleconferences hosted by Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association will be held every Tuesday, starting June 7, 2016 at 1:00 p.m. Dial (800) 315-6338, and enter participant code: YUKON #.

Assessment Projects

Lower Yukon Test Fishery (LYTF)/ ADF&G and YDFDA

In anticipation of an early salmon run, LYTF operations began early starting with the drift gillnet program. Due to debris and heavy winds, shorter nets had to be used and some fishing periods were missed.

The 8.5-inch set gillnet was fully operational on May 24 at the Big Eddy site in the South Mouth of the Yukon River. Chinook salmon catches continue to be low and sporadic at this site. The 8.5-inch set gillnet was fully operational at the Middle Mouth site on June 3. Chinook salmon catches have been low and the project has been hindered by large amounts of woody debris in the river. The cumulative CPUE for both sites combined as of June 5 is 4.26, which is above the historical average of 2.87. Operations at LYTF have been altered from previous years, so caution should be taken when comparing current catch rates to historical catch rates.

The 8.25-inch drift gillnet test fishery for Chinook salmon has been fully operational at the Big Eddy site since May 23. The cumulative CPUE as of June 5 is 23.63, which is slightly below the historical average of 26.54.

The 5.5-inch drift gill net test fisheries for summer chum salmon at the Big Eddy and Middle Mouth sites have been fully operational since May 19 and June 4, respectively. The combined cumulative CPUE for both sites as of June 5 is 358.07, which is well above the historical median of 100.60 for this date.

Any Chinook salmon healthy enough will be released alive from the test nets and injured salmon will be distributed to village elders by the Tribal Councils. Fewer set net sites are being fished than in the past to reduce Chinook salmon mortality.

Sonar Project near Pilot Station/ ADF&G

The sonar project near Pilot Station began partial operations on May 30 and has been fully operational since June 1. The project is operating well and has not experienced any major issues from debris or equipment malfunction. Chinook salmon passage as of June 5 is estimated to be 6,415 fish which is well above the historical cumulative average of 944 Chinook salmon for this date. Summer chum salmon passage as of June 5 is estimated to be 34,710 fish which is well above the historical cumulative median of 2,597 summer chum salmon for this date.

Management Strategies

A conservative management approach is being taken early in the summer season because of the below average return of Chinook salmon expected in 2016.

Closures for subsistence salmon gillnet fishing have been implemented from the Northern Portion of the Coastal District up through District 3. These closures will be implemented in upriver districts and subdistricts based on historical migratory timing prior to the arrival of Chinook salmon. The intent is to protect the early fish and first pulse of Chinook salmon as they make their way upriver.

Restrictions are expected to be in place for most of the Chinook salmon run. However, management strategies may change based on inseason run assessment information. It is still too early in the season to assess the strength of the 2016 Chinook salmon run. Therefore, current management actions are being based on the preseason Chinook salmon outlook.

Fortunately, the 2016 summer chum salmon run is expected to be average to above average. Fishing opportunities to harvest summer chum salmon with selective gear such as dip nets, beach seines, and live-release fish wheels will be provided. Yukon Area fishermen should be prepared for liberal subsistence and commercial opportunity using selective fishing gear to harvest summer chum salmon while releasing Chinook salmon safely to the water. These gear types may not be efficient until strong pulses of summer chum enter the river.

The 2016 season is expected to be another challenging year for Yukon River fishermen. ADF&G and USFWS would like to extend thanks and appreciation to the fishermen of the Yukon River for their continuing efforts to conserve Chinook salmon.

Current Management

General Reminders:

- Fishermen are reminded that beach seine gear may not exceed 150 fathoms in length, 100 meshes in depth, and 4-inches stretched measure. Additionally, beach seines may not be constructed of monofilament webbing. All king salmon must be released alive from beach seine gear.
- During subsistence salmon fishing closures in the Yukon Area, gillnets 4-inch or smaller mesh of 60 feet or shorter length may be used for non-salmon species. All salmon caught in 4-inch gillnets may be retained, but fishermen are reminded not to target salmon as this gear is intended for non-salmon species.

Southern Portion of the Coastal District (from the Naskonat Peninsula north to 62 degrees North latitude):

Subsistence salmon fishing is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 6-inch or smaller mesh size gillnets until further notice.

Northern Portion of the Coastal District (from 62 degrees North latitude to Point Romanof and including all state marine waters):

Subsistence salmon fishing is closed until further notice.

District 1 (including the Black River):

Currently, subsistence salmon fishing is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with dip nets and beach seines to target summer chum salmon. All Chinook salmon must be released alive from dip net and beach seine gear.

Effective at 4:00 p.m. Tuesday, June 7, subsistence fishing with dip net and beach seine gear will close prior to a 12-hour commercial summer chum salmon opening.

Effective at 8:00 a.m. Wednesday, June 8, subsistence salmon fishing will reopen with dip net and beach seine gear for 24 hours a day, seven days per week to target summer chum salmon.

District 2: Subsistence salmon fishing with gillnets is closed. Subsistence fishing with dip nets and beach seine gear is open for 24 hours a day, seven days per week to target summer chum salmon. Fishermen are reminded that Chinook salmon caught in dip nets and beach seines must be released alive.

District 3: Subsistence salmon fishing with gillnets is closed. Subsistence fishing with dip nets and beach seine gear is open for 24 hours a day, seven days per week to target summer chum salmon. Fishermen are reminded that Chinook salmon caught in dip nets and beach seines must be released alive.

Innoko River: Subsistence fishing is currently open 24 hours a day, seven days per week and fishermen may use 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets. Fishermen should be prepared for management actions that restrict subsistence salmon fishing when the first pulse of Chinook salmon is expected to migrate into the Innoko River.

Subdistrict 4-A Lower (from $\frac{3}{4}$ miles downstream of Old Paradise Village upstream to Stink Creek, which includes the mainstem Yukon River communities of Anvik and Grayling) and the **Anvik Special Management Area** (which includes the lower 12 miles of the Anvik River):

Subsistence salmon fishing is currently open 24 hours a day, seven days per week and fishermen may use fish wheels and 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets.

Effective 6:00 p.m. Monday, June 6, subsistence salmon fishing with gillnets is closed to protect Chinook salmon.

Effective 6:00 p.m. Tuesday, June 7, subsistence fishing will reopen with dip nets, beach seines, and live-release fish wheels for 24 hours a day, seven days per week to target summer chum salmon.

Subdistrict 4-A Upper (from Stink Creek upstream to Cone Point, which includes the mainstem Yukon River communities of Kaltag, Nulato, and Koyukuk):

Subsistence salmon fishing is currently open 24 hours a day, seven days per week and fishermen may use fish wheels and 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets.

Effective 6:00 p.m. Friday, June 10, subsistence salmon fishing with gillnets is closed to protect Chinook salmon.

Effective 6:00 p.m. Saturday, June 11, subsistence fishing will reopen with dip nets, beach seines, and live-release fish wheels for 24 hours a day, seven days per week to target summer chum salmon.

Fishermen are required to immediately release Chinook salmon alive from dip nets, beach seines, and fish wheels. Fishermen are also reminded they must closely attend the fish wheel and Chinook salmon must be immediately released alive from the livebox. The requirement to release Chinook salmon alive will be strictly enforced. Great care must be taken to assure Chinook salmon are released quickly and unharmed so that they can swim the long distance upriver and spawn successfully. Fishermen are also strongly encouraged to avoid fishing where Chinook salmon may be encountered.

Subdistricts 4-B and 4-C (from Cone Point to Illinois Creek, which includes the mainstem Yukon River communities of Galena and Ruby):

Subsistence fishing is currently open 24 hours a day, seven days per week and fishermen may use fish wheels or gillnets (set net only) with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or less. Fishermen should be prepared for management actions that will close subsistence salmon fishing when Chinook salmon are expected to arrive in the subdistricts.

Koyukuk River: Subsistence fishing is currently open 24 hours a day, seven days per week and fishermen may use gillnets with mesh size of 7.5 inches or less. Fishermen should be prepared for management actions that will close subsistence salmon fishing when the first pulse of Chinook salmon is expected to be migrating into the Koyukuk River.

District 5: Subsistence fishing is currently open 24 hours a day, seven days per week and fishermen may use fish wheels or gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or less.

District 6: By regulation, the subsistence salmon fishing schedule consists of two 42-hour fishing periods per week from 6:00 p.m. Mondays until 12:00 noon Wednesdays and from 6:00 p.m. Fridays until 12:00 noon Sundays and fishermen may use fish wheels or gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or less. Fishermen should anticipate fishing restrictions when Chinook salmon start moving into the Tanana River.

Old Minto Area: Subsistence salmon fishing is open five days per week from 6:00 p.m. Fridays until 6:00 p.m. Wednesdays and fishermen may use fish wheels or gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or less. Fishermen should anticipate fishing restrictions when Chinook salmon start moving into the Old Minto area.

Upper Tanana Area (the Tanana River from the confluence with the mouth of Volkmar River on the north bank and the mouth of the Johnson River on the south bank upstream to the Tanana River headwaters, including the communities of Healy Lake, Dot Lake, Tanacross, Northway, and the Tok area): Subsistence fishing is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week. Fishermen may use fish wheels or gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or less.

Commercial Fishing:

The Lower Yukon Area summer chum salmon dip net and beach seine commercial fishery will begin on June 7 for one 12-hour period.

District 1 (including the Black River):

Commercial summer chum salmon fishing in District 1 with dip nets and beach seines is open:

- 6:00 p.m. Tuesday, June 7, until 6:00 a.m. Wednesday, June 8

Summer chum salmon catches and incidental catches and releases of Chinook salmon from this commercial period will be evaluated to determine additional commercial openings. All Chinook salmon caught in dip net and beach seine gear must be released alive and recorded on a fish ticket.

The subsistence fishing schedule and recorded fishery announcements will be available 24 hours a day at **(866) 479-7387** (toll free outside of Fairbanks); in Fairbanks, call **(907) 459-7387**.

The Emmonak ADF&G office is open. If you have any questions regarding this report, please call (907) 949-1320.

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