

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



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**2017 Yukon River Fall Salmon Fishery News Release # 56
Fall Update # 8, Yukon Area Salmon Fishery
Districts Affected: Yukon Area**

Fall Season Assessment

The 2017 fall chum salmon preliminary estimated total run size is 2,271,000 fish which is the second largest run since 1974. This level of abundance is sufficient to provide for escapements, subsistence harvests, with a surplus available for commercial and personal use purposes.

The fall chum salmon run that entered in July has reached the upper portions of the Yukon River drainage and the spawning grounds. The largest pulse of fall chum salmon that entered August 12 is currently at the Chandalar River escapement project and near Fort Yukon. This large group of fish is expected to be near the Canadian border around September 20. The pulse that entered on August 19 is expected to be near Fort Yukon around September 17, and the Canadian border around September 27. The Tanana River should have fall chum salmon throughout common fishing areas for the remainder of September.

Coho salmon entered the river in roughly four pulses from mid-August to September 8. The coho salmon preliminary estimate of index run size is 288,000 fish which is above the historical median of 198,000 fish through this date.

Fall Assessment Projects

Lower Yukon River Cooperative Fall Drift Test Fishing/ADF&G, YDFDA

The cumulative CPUE for fall chum salmon as of September 10 was 3,823.57, which is above the historical median of 1,923.23 for this date. The cumulative CPUE for coho salmon as of September 10 was 786.49, which is above the historical median of 535.76 for this date. This project concluded operations for the season on September 10.

Mountain Village Drift Test Fishing/Asacarsarmiut Traditional Council

The cumulative CPUE for fall chum salmon as of September 10 was 6,411.90, which is above the historical median of 2,013.27 for this date. The cumulative CPUE for coho salmon as of September

10 was 1,644.01, which is above the historical median of 1,087.74 for this date. This project concludes for the season on September 12 based on the timing lag from the LYTF project.

Sonar Project near Pilot Station/ADF&G

The cumulative fall chum salmon passage estimate through September 7 was 1,829,791, which is above the median passage of approximately 688,000 fish for this date. The cumulative coho salmon passage estimate through September 7 was 166,499, which is above the median passage of approximately 160,000 fish for this date. This project concluded for the season on September 7.

Chandalar River Sonar/USFWS

The cumulative fall chum salmon passage estimate as of September 10 was 143,984, which is well above the median passage of approximately 94,000 fish for this date. Based on median timing, 40% of the fall chum salmon run is at this project by this time. The upper end of the escapement goal range of 74,000 to 152,000 should be exceeded on September 11 as the largest pulse is currently passing through the sonar counter.

Sonar Project near Eagle/ADF&G, DFO

The cumulative fall chum salmon passage estimate through September 10 was 43,184, which is well above the median passage of approximately 28,000 fish for this date. The escapement goal range after U.S. and Canada harvests above the sonar project is 70,000 to 104,000 fall chum salmon.

Upper Porcupine River Sonar near Old Crow, Canada/DFO

The Upper Porcupine sonar transitioned from Chinook to fall chum salmon on August 5 which is earlier than previous years. The cumulative fall chum salmon passage estimate through September 9 was 27,164 fish. For comparison between August 21 and September 9, the cumulative passage of 24,711 is well above the median cumulative passage of 11,400 for this same time frame.

Fishing Branch River Weir/Sonar/DFO

The weir and sonar operations began counting on September 1. The estimated passage of fall chum salmon through September 7 is 2,899 which is near the historical median of 2,053 for this date. The interim escapement goal range for this system is 22,000 to 49,000 fall chum salmon.

Age Composition Fall Season/ADF&G

The preliminary fall chum salmon age composition from the LYTF 6-inch drift gillnets indicates the run is dominated by age-4 fish, which is typical. The 2017 preliminary proportion of age-4 is 82% which is well above the average of 66%. Correspondingly the proportion of age-5 is 16% which is well below the average of 32%. Females represent 61% of 1,293 fish sampled which is near the average is 58%. Preliminary age samples from the commercial test fishery also indicate high proportions of age-4 fish at 79% and age-5 fish at 18% based on 690 samples.

Stock Identification

Genetic mixed stock analysis (MSA) on chum salmon for the strata from August 29–September 7 is in the lab and results will be posted in ADF&Gs Yukon River Daily Update as soon as they arrive and will be reported in the next weekly update.

Fall Season Management Strategies

Subsistence fishermen may use 7.5 inch or smaller mesh size gillnets and fish wheels in all areas of the Yukon River. Subsistence fishermen using four inch mesh or less gillnets may use an aggregate length of set gillnet not exceeding 150 fathoms in length, and drift gillnets not

exceeding 50 fathoms in length. In the upper portion of Subdistrict 4-A, drift gillnets may not exceed 150 feet in length.

Current Management

Coastal District (from the Naskonat Peninsula to 1 mile south of Black River, including the communities of Hooper Bay and Scammon Bay):

Subsistence fishing is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week, with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets.

District 1 (including the area 1 mile south of Black River north to Point Romanof and waters up to 3 miles offshore, including the communities of Nunam-Iqua, Alakanuk, Emmonak, and Kotlik):

Subsistence salmon fishing is open 24 hours per day, seven days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets.

District 2:

Subsistence salmon fishing is open 24 hours per day, seven days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets.

District 3:

Subsistence salmon fishing is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets.

Innoko River:

Subsistence salmon fishing is currently open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets.

Subdistrict 4-A (from $\frac{3}{4}$ mile downstream of Old Paradise Village upstream to Cone Point, which includes the mainstem Yukon River communities of Anvik, Grayling, Kaltag, Nulato, and Koyukuk):

Subsistence fishing is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh size set gillnets and fish wheels.

Drift gillnet fishing is open in the upper portion of Subdistrict 4-A only (Stink Creek to the tip of Cone Point and includes Kaltag, Nulato, and Koyukuk) for the remainder of the fall season.

Drift gillnets may not exceed 150 feet in length.

Koyukuk River:

Subsistence fishing is currently open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets.

Subdistrict 4-B and 4-C (from Cone Point upstream to the westernmost edge of Illinois Creek, which includes the communities of Galena and Ruby):

Subsistence fishing is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh size set gillnets and fish wheels.

District 5 (from the western edge of the mouth of Illinois Creek to the U.S./Canada border, including all adjacent tributaries and the communities of Tanana, Rampart, Stevens Village, Beaver, Venetie, Fort Yukon, Chalkyitsik, Circle, and Eagle):

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

*A fishing permit is required to fish for all species in the following locations: the portion of Subdistrict 5-C and 5-D from the western most tip of Garnet Island upstream to the mouth of Dall River, between the western tip of Garnet Island and the Dall River (Dalton Highway bridge area) and from the upstream mouth of 22 Mile Slough to the U.S./Canada border. Subsistence fishermen outside of the permit area are encouraged to fill out their subsistence salmon catch calendars. Calendars and subsistence fishing permits are available from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game office in Fairbanks.

Subdistricts 6-A and 6-B (from the mouth of the Tanana River upstream to the regulatory marker at the mouth of the Wood River, which includes the communities of Manley, Minto, and Nenana):

Subsistence fishing is open on the regulatory fishing schedule of two 42-hour periods per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels:

- **6 p.m. Fridays to noon Sundays**
- **6 p.m. Mondays to noon Wednesdays**

Kantishna River:

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

Old Minto Area:

Subsistence fishing is on the regulatory subsistence fishing schedule of 5 days per week from 6 p.m. Fridays until 6 p.m. Wednesdays with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels.

*Subsistence fishermen are reminded that a subsistence fishing permit is required to fish for salmon in the Tanana River drainage. Permits are available from the ADF&G office in Fairbanks. Subsistence fishermen fishing in the upper portion of Subdistrict 6-B, from three miles upstream of the mouth of Totchaket Slough to Wood River, are required to report their harvest catches to the department by **4:30 PM Thursday** each week by contacting the department at **(907) 459-7388**. When you call, please provide your name, permit number, fishing location, and daily catch by species for that week.

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 with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels.

*A subsistence fishing permit is required to fish in the Upper Tanana River Drainage.

Subdistricts 6-C (Personal use fishery from the regulatory marker at the mouth of the Wood River upstream to the downstream mouth of the Salcha River, which includes the communities of Fairbanks, North Pole, and Salcha):

Personal use fishing is open on the regulatory fishing schedule of two 42-hour periods per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels:

- **6 p.m. Fridays to noon Sundays**
- **6 p.m. Mondays to noon Wednesdays**

A reminder to fishermen that a personal use salmon fishing permit and a sport fish license are required to fish in Subdistrict 6-C of the Tanana River. Fishermen are required to report their harvest catches to the department by **4:30 PM Thursday** each week by contacting the department at **(907) 459-7388**. When you call, please provide your name, permit number, fishing location, and daily catch by species for that week.

Fall Season Commercial Salmon Fishing

The fall chum directed commercial fishery ended by regulation on August 31 in Districts 1 and 2. In accordance with the Yukon River Coho Salmon Management Plan, the coho salmon directed commercial fishing season opened in District 1 on September 1 and closed by regulation after September 10.

In the Upper Yukon, the fall chum salmon commercial fishing season is open in District 4, Subdistricts 5-B and 5-C, and District 6. All commercial fishermen must make sure they have a buyer before fishing each opening. Commercial fishermen may use fish wheels and gillnets restricted to 6-inch or smaller mesh size.

The sale of incidentally caught Chinook salmon in the fall chum salmon directed commercial fisheries is prohibited. Commercial gillnet fishermen can release live Chinook salmon or use them for subsistence purposes. Chinook salmon retained from commercial gear must be recorded on a fish ticket as retained but not sold.

Processors, catcher sellers, or direct marketers intending to operate in the Yukon Area must notify the department of their intent prior to operating by contacting the Fairbanks office at 459-7274.

District 1:

Verbal reports from District 1 period #18 commercial opening on September 6 indicate a preliminary harvest of 1,490 fall chum and 3,122 coho salmon from 117 deliveries. The preliminary cumulative commercial harvest in District 1 for the 2017 fall season is 328,338 fall chum and 95,990 coho salmon.

District 2:

The preliminary cumulative commercial harvest in District 2 for the 2017 fall season is 134,913 fall chum salmon and 33,598 coho salmon.

Subdistrict 5-B, and 5-C Commercial Fishing Schedule:

Commercial fishing in Subdistricts 5-B and 5-C, is open 24 hours per day, seven days per week until further notice. Each commercial fishing period will be 7-days and will end at 12:00 p.m.

Mondays each week until further notice. Fishermen may use fish wheels or gillnets with 6 inch or smaller mesh size. Commercial fishermen must confirm their market before they fish.

The preliminary cumulative commercial harvest through August 14 is 1,952 fall chum salmon.

Subdistrict 6-A, 6-B, and 6-C (from the mouth of the Tanana River upstream to the downstream mouth of the Salcha River, which includes the communities of Manley, Minto, Nenana, Fairbanks, North Pole, and Salcha):

Commercial fishing is open for two 42-hour fishing periods per week on the following schedule with 6-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels:

- **6 p.m. Fridays, until noon Sundays**
- **6 p.m. Mondays, until noon Wednesdays**

Commercial fishermen should coordinate with the buyer on a daily basis regarding scheduling deliveries. Commercial fish wheels in District 6 are not required to be manned. All salmon harvested during commercial fishing operations must be recorded on a fish ticket at the time of sale. Chinook salmon may not be sold. All Chinook salmon caught but not sold must also be recorded on the fish ticket. Other fish species caught but not sold must also be recorded on the fish ticket. Processors, catcher-sellers, or direct marketers should notify the department of their intent to operate by contacting the Fairbanks office at 459-7274.

Fishing schedules, test fish catches and sonar counts are available 24 hours a day at (866) 479-7387 (toll free outside of Fairbanks); in Fairbanks, call (907) 459-7387.

If you have any questions, please call ADF&G in Emmonak at (907) 949-1320, the ADF&G office in Fairbanks at (907) 459-7274 or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Fairbanks at (907) 455-1849.

This is an announcement by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

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