



Advisory Announcement

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2020 Yukon River Salmon Fall Fishery Announcement #6

Fall Update # 3, Yukon Area Salmon Fishery

Districts Affected: Yukon Area

The 2020 fall chum salmon preseason projection, based on the relationship between summer chum and fall chum salmon runs, is for a run size of less than 450,000 fish. Chum salmon entering the Yukon River now appear to be mostly fall chum salmon. The front of the fall season chum salmon run migration is expected to be approaching Nulato August 3, Ruby August 6, Tanana August 10, Stevens Village August 15, Fort Yukon August 20, and U.S./Canada border August 31. The pulse that entered the lower Yukon on July 29 would be approaching Holy Cross August 4, Kaltag August 9, Galena August 11, Rapids August 17, Fort Yukon August 26, and U.S./Canada border September 5. Some Tanana summer chum salmon stocks may be in the first group, but most of the chum salmon should be fall stocks headed to the upper Yukon River.

Coho salmon typically enter the Yukon River in mid-August with the bulk of the run passing through the LYTF between August 13 and 24. The primary parent year for coho salmon this year is from the escapements of 2016. An average run size of coho salmon is approximately 243,000 fish.

Fall Assessment Projects

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

The cumulative CPUE through August 3 was 421.41 for fall chum salmon, which is below the historical average of 505.45 for this date. No coho salmon have been caught at these sites at this time.

Mountain Village Drift Test Fishing / Asacarsarmiut Traditional Council

The cumulative CPUE through August 3 was 305.86 for fall chum salmon, which is below the historical median of 667.03 for this date. No coho salmon have been caught at these sites at this time.

Sonar Project near Pilot Station / ADF&G

The cumulative fall chum salmon passage estimate through August 3 was 126,200 fish, which is below the median passage of approximately 214,000 fish for this date. The cumulative coho salmon passage estimate through August 3 was 1,800 fish, which is below the median passage of approximately 3,000 fish for this date.

Teedriinjik (Chandalar) River sonar project operated by USFWS will not be operating this season.

Age Composition Fall Season / ADF&G

The preliminary chum salmon age composition from the LYTF 6-inch drift gillnets through July 20 consists of 32% age-4 and 67% age-5 (n=97) this compares to the average of 57% age-4 and 42% age-5. Females represent 51% of the fish sampled (n=244), which is below the average of 55%, as of August 2. The average length is 599 mm from a sample of 244 fall chum salmon, which is above the 10-year (2010–2019) average of 583 mm.

Chum Salmon Stock Identification / USFWS, ADF&G

Genetic mixed stock analysis (MSA) on the transition period from summer to fall chum salmon from July 19 through August 2 is on the way to the USFWS lab. Results will be posted in the daily update when available later this week.

Fall Season Management Strategy:

Yukon River Districts 1-4 have transitioned to fall season management and are on reduced fishing schedules. The remaining upriver districts and subdistricts will transition to fall season management as the fall chum salmon migration reaches those areas. The preseason fall chum salmon projection does not meet the threshold of 550,000 fish needed to allow commercial fishing and the department does not anticipate any commercial openings to begin the fall season. Also, the projected run size is not expected to meet escapement goals and treaty objectives. As a result, fishermen should be prepared for reduced subsistence fishing time to allow more fall chum salmon to reach the spawning areas. Subsistence fishermen should stand by for announcements regarding changes to the subsistence salmon fishing schedule.

Summer Season Management Overview

The Chinook and summer chum salmon runs are complete in the lower river and management has transitioned to fall season in the lower river districts. Despite restrictive actions taken throughout the Yukon River and reported low subsistence harvests of Chinook salmon, poorer than expected fish passage at the Eagle sonar warrants a closure for fishing in District 5. While only the tail end of the Chinook run is present, it is imperative that all Chinook salmon moving through District 5 escape to the spawning grounds. Therefore, salmon fishing remains closed in District 5 and the fall fishing schedule is being delayed until fall chum arrive. The use of 4-inch and smaller mesh gillnets is being reinstated to target non-salmon in subdistrict 5-A, B, and C. Fishermen in subdistricts 5-D Lower, Middle and Upper should anticipate announcements re-instating the use of 4-inch gillnets once the majority of tail end of Chinook salmon have passed through the area.

Based on run timing, the Chinook salmon run should be nearly complete in the Tanana River and summer chum salmon should be present. In the subsistence fishery, the requirement for manned wheels and selective gear is being removed. Gillnets, dip nets, beach seines, and fish wheels may be used during open periods and fishermen may retain Chinook salmon. Because of the poor summer chum run, fishing will remain on half schedule for the remainder of the summer season in the Tanana River.

Summer Assessment Projects

Eagle Sonar / ADF&G

The Eagle sonar began operations on July 1. Chinook salmon passage, through August 3, is estimated to be 23,565 fish, which is below the historical cumulative average of 50,396 fish for this date. For years with late run timing, the typical third quarter point for passage of the run at this project is on August 3. The Interim Management Escapement Goal for Canadian-origin Chinook salmon is 42,500-55,000 fish. The goal is assessed post-season using the Eagle sonar count minus the estimated U.S. and Canadian harvest of Chinook salmon above the sonar. Based on current passage and run timing, it is unlikely that the lower end of the escapement goal will be met.

ADF&G, USFWS, and TCC projects that did not operate in 2020

Due to COVID-19 travel restrictions or funding concerns, these projects did not operate: East Fork Andreafsky Weir, Anvik River Sonar, Gisasa River Weir, Henshaw Creek Weir, and Salcha River tower/sonar.

Current Subsistence Management Actions

Coastal District (Naskonat Peninsula to 1 nautical mile south of the Black River, which includes Hooper Bay and Scammon Bay):

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

Districts 1-3 (Black River, and communities of Emmonak, Nunam Iqua, Alakanuk, Kotlik, Mountain Village, Pitkas Point, St. Mary's, Pilot Station, Marshall, Russian Mission and Holy Cross):

Fishing is open with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets on a schedule of two 18-hour periods per week from:

2:00 p.m. Saturdays to 8:00 a.m. Sundays

2:00 p.m. Wednesdays to 8:00 a.m. Thursdays

During subsistence salmon fishing closures, only gillnets with 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target non-salmon species. Fish wheels may not be operated during the closures.

Innoko River:

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

District 4 (Grayling, Anvik, Kaltag, Nulato, Koyukuk, Galena, and Ruby):

Fishing is open with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels on a schedule of two 18-hour periods per week from:

6:00 p.m. Saturdays to 12:00 noon Sundays

6:00 p.m. Wednesdays to 12:00 noon Thursdays

During subsistence salmon fishing closures, only gillnets with 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target non-salmon species. Fish wheels may not be operated during the closures.

Koyukuk River (Huslia, Hughes, Alatna, Allakaket, and Bettles):

Fishing is open 24-hours per day, 7 days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels.

Subdistricts 5-A, 5-B, and 5-C (Tanana and Rampart):

Subsistence salmon fishing is currently closed and will remain closed until further notice.

Effective 6 p.m. Tuesday, August 4, gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to fish for non-salmon species 24-hours per day, 7 days per week.

District 5-D (Stevens Village, Beaver, Venetie, Chalkyitsik, Fort Yukon, Circle and Eagle):

Subsistence salmon fishing is currently closed and will remain closed until further notice. **All 4-inch or smaller mesh gillnets must be removed from the water.**

A subsistence permit is required to fish for all species in portions of Subdistricts 5-C and 5-D from the western most tip of Garnet Island upstream to the mouth of Dall River (Dalton Highway bridge area) and from the upstream mouth of 22 Mile Slough to the U.S./Canada border.

Subdistricts 6-A and 6-B (from the mouth of the Tanana River upstream to the Wood River, including Manley, Minto, and Nenana):

Subsistence fishing is open for one more 42-hour period with **dip nets, beach seines, and live release fish wheels** from 6 p.m. Monday, August 3 to 12 p.m. noon Wednesday, August 5. Fish wheels must be closely attended, and all Chinook salmon must be released alive immediately during this opening.

Effective 6 p.m. Friday, August 7, subsistence fishing will open with 6-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels on a reduced regulatory schedule of two 24-hour periods per week from:

**6 p.m. Fridays to 6 p.m. Saturdays
6 p.m. Mondays to 6 p.m. Tuesdays**

Fishermen may retain Chinook salmon and are no longer required to closely attend fish wheels.

Kantishna River:

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 currently open with **dip nets, beach seines, and live release fish wheels** until 6 p.m. Wednesday, August 5. Fish wheels must be closely attended, and all Chinook salmon must be released alive immediately during this opening.

Effective 6 p.m. Friday, August 7, subsistence fishing will open with 6-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels on the regulatory schedule of one 5-day period per week from:

6 p.m. Fridays to 6 p.m. Wednesdays

Fishermen may retain Chinook salmon and are no longer required to closely attend fish wheels.

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):

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

Subdistrict 6-C Salmon (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 will open for one more 42-hour period with **dip nets and live release fish wheels only** from 6 p.m. Monday, August 3 to 12 p.m. noon Wednesday, August 5. Fish wheels must be closely attended, and all Chinook salmon must be released alive immediately during this period.

In the Personal Use fishery regulations, except during times of conservation for salmon, dip nets may not be used to harvest salmon. Therefore, after 12 p.m. noon Wednesday, August 5, dip nets may not be used.

Effective 6 p.m. Friday, August 7, personal use fishing will open with 6-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels only on a reduced regulatory schedule of two 24-hour periods per week from:

**6 p.m. Fridays to 6 p.m. Saturdays
6 p.m. Mondays to 6 p.m. Tuesdays**

Fishermen may retain Chinook salmon and are no longer required to closely attend fish wheels.

Subdistrict 6-C Whitefish and Sucker Personal Use Fishing

Personal use whitefish and sucker fishing with gillnets and fish wheels is closed until 6 p.m. Friday, August 7 in Subdistrict 6-C of the Tanana River. Fishing with other gear for whitefish and suckers in this area remains open 7 days per week, 24 hours per day.

In the Tanana River up to the Wood River (Kantishna River and Subdistricts 6-A and 6-B) a subsistence permit is required for salmon fishing. A personal use permit is required to fish for salmon from the mouth of the Wood River upstream to the mouth of the Salcha River (Subdistrict 6-C).

A subsistence permit is also required for all species in the “Upper Tanana River” area 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. A personal use permit is required to fish for whitefish and suckers in the Fairbanks Non-Subsistence area (from the Wood River upstream to the mouth of the Volkmar River on the north bank and the mouth of the Johnson River on the south bank). A subsistence permit is required for northern pike in the Tolovana River drainage, including Minto Flats.

Subsistence harvest calendars and subsistence fishing permits are available from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game Fairbanks office (459-7274) or online at www.adfg.alaska.gov/store/.



This is an announcement by the ADF&G in cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

To reach the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Fairbanks call 456-0406.

Announcements will be shared on Facebook at www.facebook.com/YukonRiverFishingADFG

**COVID-19**

Under Alaska’s Health Mandates 10, 17, and 18, Subsistence fishing is Essential and is part of Alaska’s Essential Services and Critical Infrastructure. Subsistence fishermen should ensure that all travel and other activities follow protocols in Alaska COVID-19 Health Mandates. COVID-19 Health Mandates may be found here: <https://gov.alaska.gov/home/covid19-healthmandates/>.