



# Federal Subsistence Board Fact Sheet



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Bureau of Land Management  
National Park Service  
Bureau of Indian Affairs

Forest Service

**Contact:** Scott Ayers  
(907) 744-3824 or (800) 478-1456  
or by email at: [scott\\_ayers@fws.gov](mailto:scott_ayers@fws.gov)

## **Fisheries Temporary Special Action Request FSA22-01: Yukon River Chinook and Chum Salmon Fisheries**

**Background:** The Yukon River drainage is the largest in the state of Alaska and provides residents from over 60 communities with fishery resources, including Chinook and Chum Salmon, for subsistence purposes. Over the last several years, moderate to severe restrictions on subsistence harvest have been put in place to conserve Chinook and Chum Salmon. These restrictions have impacted subsistence uses throughout the Yukon River drainage.

### **Question 1: What is a temporary special action and how long will it last?**

Answer: A temporary special action is a regulatory change made outside of the normal regulatory cycle to modify harvest limits, seasons, methods or means when unusual situations arise, such as significant changes in fish or wildlife abundance. There must be public notice and a public hearing before the Board can act on a temporary special action request. The Board must also consult with the State of Alaska and the Regional Advisory Council Chairs of the affected Regions prior to acting on a temporary special action request. The Board is also seeking recommendations from the affected Regional Advisory Councils on the proposed temporary action as part of the Councils' regularly scheduled winter 2022 meetings. A temporary special action typically extends longer than 60 days but may not exceed one regulatory cycle. Permanent changes to Federal subsistence fisheries regulations must be made using the normal two-year regulatory process, which commences in early 2022.

### **Question 2: What is included in the request?**

Answer: Temporary Special Action Request FSA22-01 requests that the Federal Subsistence Board:

- Assume management of Yukon River Chinook and summer/fall chum salmon throughout the 2022 season
- Close Federal public waters of the Yukon River drainage to the harvest of Chinook and Chum Salmon except by Federally qualified subsistence users from June 1 through September 30
- Further reduce the pool of eligible harvesters based on the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) Section 804 Subsistence User Prioritization analysis

### **Question 3: How can the public comment on this specific special action request (FSA22-01)?**

Answer: A public hearing will be announced to receive public testimony on this special action request. As a guide, the public will be asked to comment on the following issues at the public hearing:

- a) Should Federal public waters be closed to the harvest of Chinook and Chum Salmon except by Federally qualified subsistence users? [See Questions 4 and 5, below]
- b) Should there be a further reduction in the pool of Federally qualified subsistence users who would be eligible to harvest Chinook and Chum Salmon? [See Question 6, below]
- c) Are the start and end dates for the closure (June 1 through September 30, 2022) appropriate dates for this special action?
- d) Are there any other comments or issues that may help the Board makes its decision on this special action request?

Public testimony on this temporary special action request will be forwarded to the Federal Subsistence Board for consideration.

Additionally, the Yukon-Kuskokwim, Western Interior Alaska, Eastern Interior Alaska, and Seward Peninsula Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils will consider Special Action Request FSA22-01 at their winter 2022 meetings. Council chairs may ask for public comment.

#### **Question 4: What Federal public waters would be affected by this special action request?**

Answer: For purposes of this discussion, the phrase “Federal public waters” is defined as those waters described under *50 CFR 100.3 Federal public waters in the Yukon River drainage* and include all navigable and non-navigable waters located within and adjacent to the exterior boundaries of the Arctic, Innoko, Kanuti, Koyukuk, Nowitna, Tetlin, Yukon Delta, and Yukon Flats National Wildlife Refuges, Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve, the Steese National Conservation Area, the White Mountains National Recreation Area, and those segments of the National Wild and Scenic River system located outside the boundaries of Federal conservation units (portions of Beaver and Birch Creeks and the Delta and Fortymile Rivers). Additionally, waters that are within and adjacent to the exterior boundaries of Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve are within Federal jurisdiction for purposes of Federal subsistence fisheries management. Federal public waters include Yukon commercial fishing Districts Y1–Y3, parts of Subdistricts 4A and 4C, and most of Subdistrict 5D (see **Figures**).

#### **Question 5: Who are Federally qualified subsistence users affected by this special action request?**

Answer: Federally qualified subsistence users are permanent residents of a rural area or community that has a Federally recognized customary and traditional use determination for that resource. All permanent rural residents of the Yukon River drainage and the community of Stebbins are Federally qualified subsistence users of Chinook and Chum Salmon in the Yukon River drainage. The area includes over 60 communities. Additionally, residents of Chevak, Hooper Bay, and Scammon Bay are Federally qualified subsistence users of fall Chum Salmon in the Yukon River drainage.

#### **Question 6: What is an ANILCA Section 804 Subsistence User Prioritization?**

Answer: The Federal Subsistence Board can use an ANILCA Section 804 analysis Subsistence User Prioritization to establish a priority among Federally qualified subsistence users whenever it is necessary to restrict the subsistence taking of fish and wildlife on Federal public lands. The reasons for establishing priority among Federally qualified subsistence users include protecting the viability of fish and wildlife populations and continuing subsistence uses. The priority shall be implemented based on the application of the following three criteria in Section 804 of ANILCA: (1) customary and direct dependence upon the populations as the mainstay of livelihood, (2) local residency, and (3) the availability of alternative resources. Based on these three criteria, the Board may reduce the pool of Federally qualified subsistence

users who are eligible to take Chinook and Chum Salmon on Federal public waters of the Yukon River drainage.

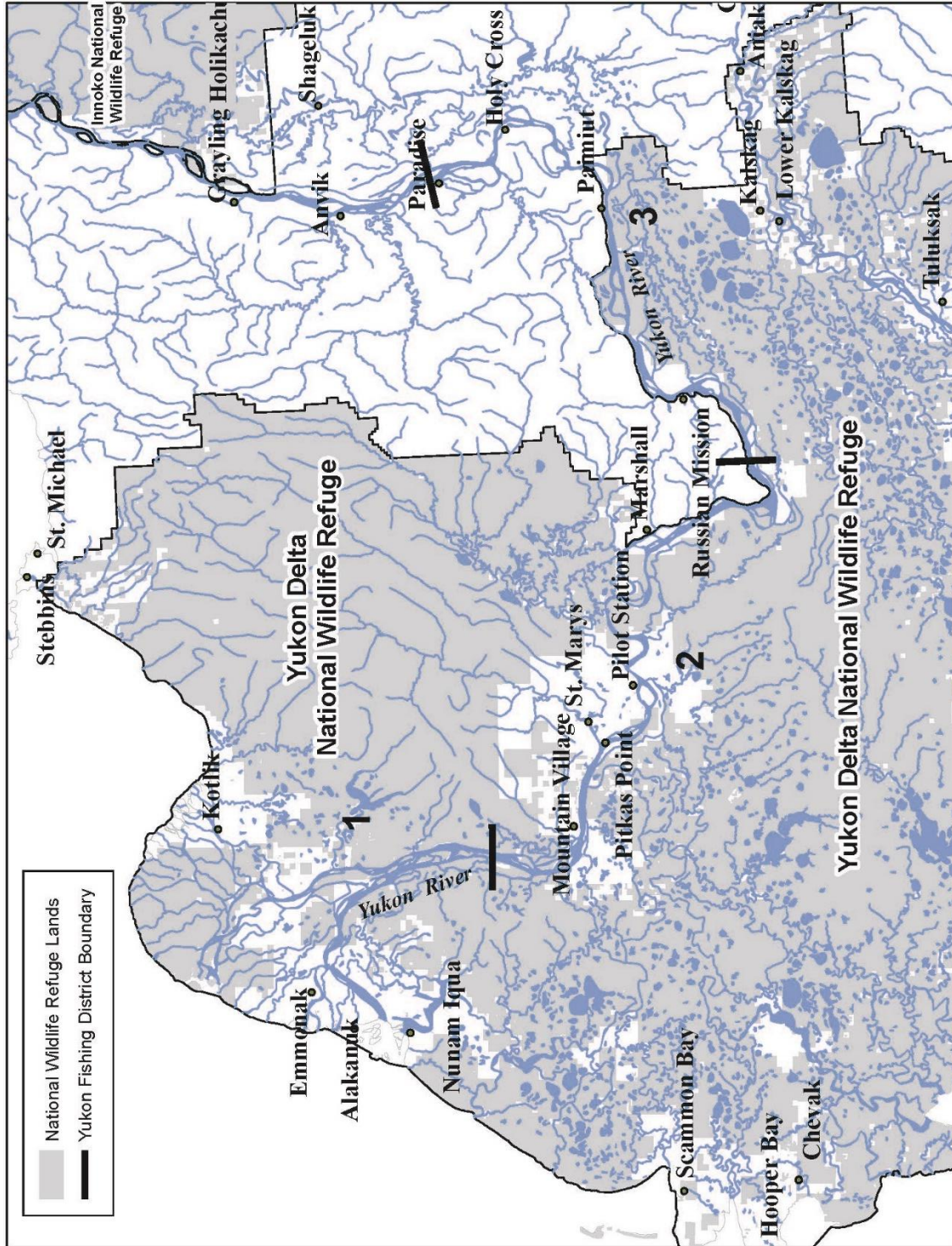
**Question 7: What is the remaining process for this special action request after the public hearing?**

Answer: The Office of Subsistence Management is currently analyzing the potential effects of this request on Chinook and Chum Salmon populations and Federal subsistence opportunity. It is anticipated that the Board will consider this special action request in April 2022. The Board will consider all information provided in the analysis, including public testimony, Tribal and Native corporation consultation, and recommendations of affected Regional Advisory Councils, when making its decision. The Board may approve, approve with modification, reject, or defer the special action request until the next regulatory cycle.

**Question 8: How can I get more information on this special action request?**

Answer: Please contact Scott Ayers, Fisheries Division Leader at the Office of Subsistence Management, at (907) 744-3824 or (800) 478-1456 with questions about Special Action Request FSA22-01, or visit the Federal Subsistence Management Program website ([www.doi.gov/subsistence/](http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/)) for more information about subsistence on Federal public lands and waters.

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**Figure 1.** Map of Yukon River drainage Districts 1, 2, and 3.

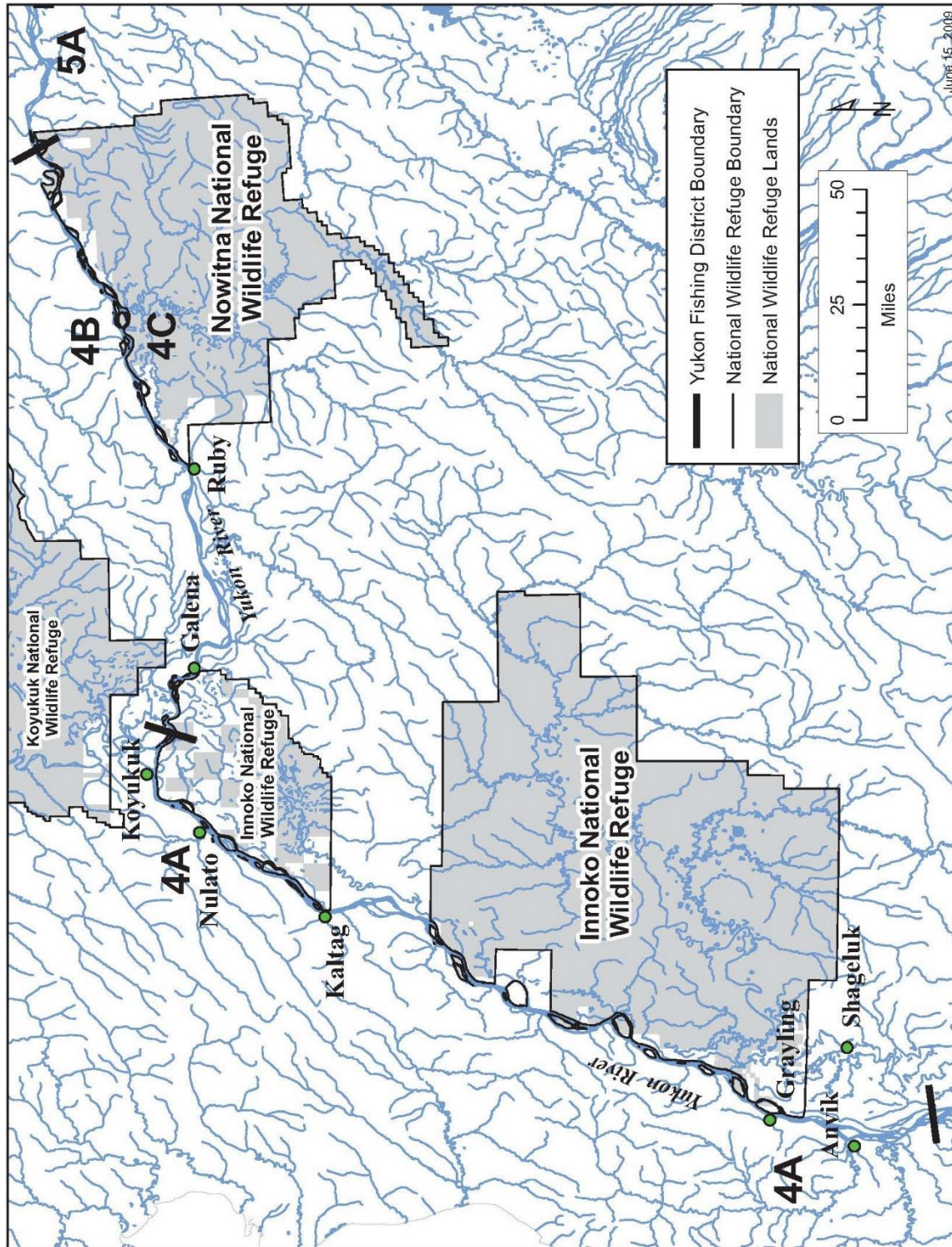


Figure 2. Map of Yukon River drainage District 4.

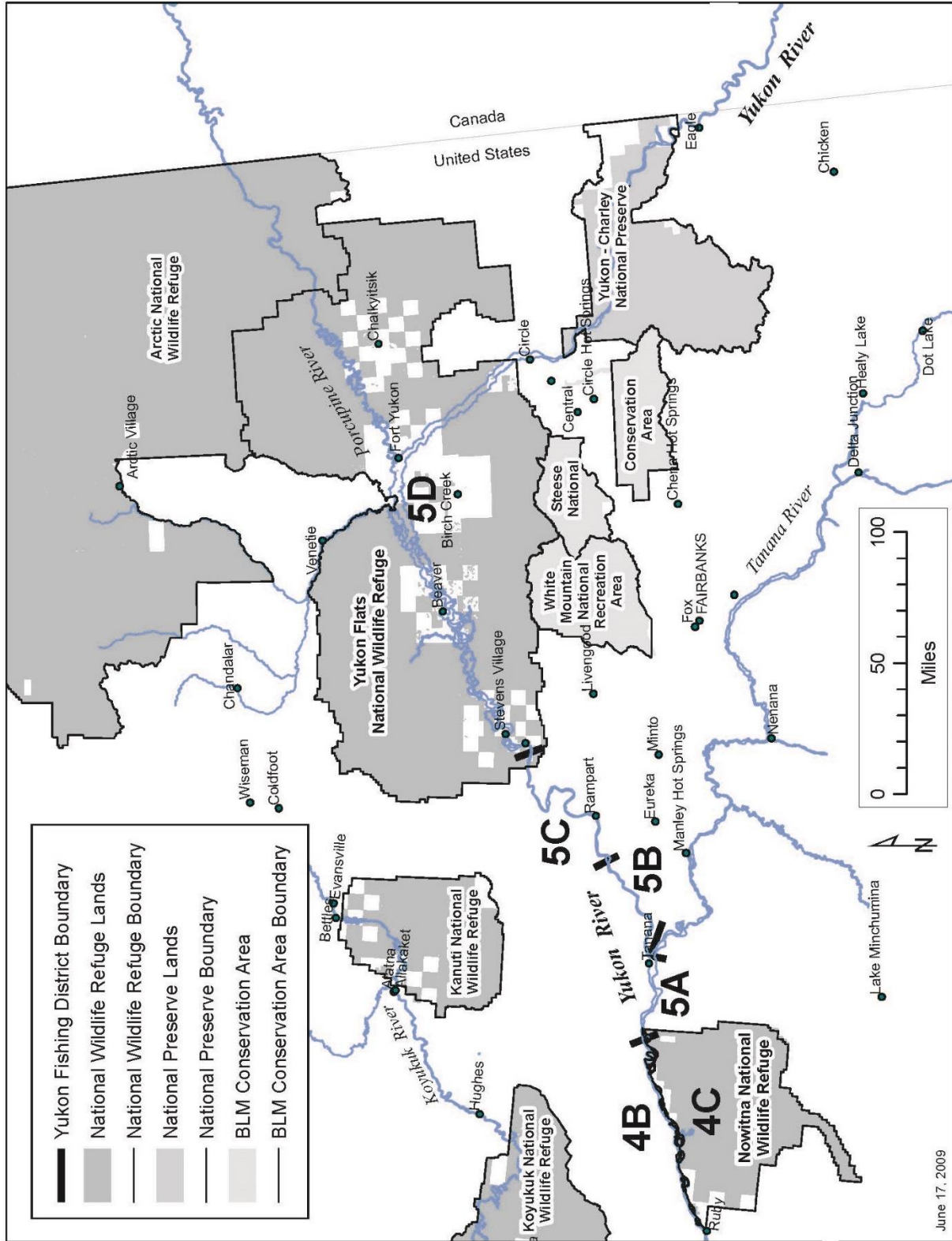


Figure 3. Map of Yukon River drainage District 5.