



**WRANGELL-ST. ELIAS
NATIONAL PARK AND PRESERVE
SUBSISTENCE AND ANTHROPOLOGY REPORT
FALL 2026**



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Federal subsistence hunting permits issued for Wrangell-St. Elias in 2026

Table 1 lists the numbers of caribou, goat, moose, and sheep permits issued by park and Tetlin National Wildlife Refuge staff for federal subsistence hunts on Wrangell-St. Elias lands in Units 11 and 12. Preliminary 2026 harvest numbers will be provided as part of the oral report.

What is next? Updated permit numbers and harvest information will be provided in the Spring 2027 report. Please remember to return your harvest reports, even if you did not hunt!

Dall Sheep Local Knowledge Interviews

Anthropology and wildlife staff at Wrangell-St. Elias conducted a series of local knowledge interviews about Dall sheep with eight long-time hunters and others with a long history of observing sheep in Wrangell-St. Elias. A second draft of the summary report is undergoing revisions. Funding for this work came from the NPS Alaska Subsistence Advisory Council and Alaska Geographic.

Technical Paper No. 526: “Understanding Wild Food Access and Availability for Four Upper Copper Basin Communities, 2022 and 2023,” Now Published!

Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve partnered with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game Division of Subsistence and the Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission from 2022 to 2025 to document changes in access to wild foods through comprehensive household harvest surveys and ethnographic interviews in four communities at the headwaters of the Copper River: Chistochina, Mentasta Lake, Mentasta Pass, Slana/Nabesna.

Wild resources continued to play an important role in these communities, with 93% of households harvesting wild resources and 98% to 100% of households using wild resources in 2022 and 2023. However, changes were also documented since the last surveys in 2009 and 2010; overall per capita harvests declined significantly in Mentasta Lake and Slana/Nabesna Road, while resource substitutions between salmon and moose appear to account for the relatively stable per capita harvests in Mentasta Pass and Chistochina. Residents in all communities shared concerns about accessing resources such as salmon and large land mammals.

Limited physical copies are available at the park’s headquarters and the Slana Ranger Station. The report is available online: adfg.alaska.gov/techpap/TP526.pdf. Thank you to Jackie Keating, Christian Woodard, David Hooper, Jesse Coleman, Carrie Hallinan for their work on the technical paper, to Dr. Barbara Cellarius for her guidance throughout the process, and to the communities of Chistochina, Mentasta Lake, Mentasta Pass, and Slana/Nabesna for welcoming the research team and providing valuable insights.

Table 1. Federal Subsistence Registration Permits in Wrangell-St. Elias NPP, 2016-2026

Unit 11 Goat (FG1101)

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026*
Permits Issued	22	26	30	27	27	20	8	6	23	19	
Individuals Hunting	4	3	8	8	4	2	1	2	1	2	
Animals Harvested	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	
Success Rate (%)	0.0	0.0	0.0	12.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	50.0	

Unit 11 Remainder Moose -- Fall Hunt in part of unit outside of the RM291 hunt area (FM1106)

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026*
Permits Issued	138	132	144	107	156	140	139	140	144	147	
Individuals Hunting	75	72	85	45	68	71	66	59	56	55	
Animals Harvested	16	13	12	10	15	11	15	10	13	5	
Success Rate (%)	21.3	18.1	14.1	22.2	22.1	15.5	22.7	16.9	23.2	9.1	

Unit 11 Moose -- Winter Hunt in southern part of unit (FM1107)

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026*
Permits Issued	20	14	11	8	8	7	10	21	13	16	
Individuals Hunting	4	4	2	2	1	2	4	1	8	6	
Animals Harvested	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	2	2	
Success Rate (%)	25.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0	25.0	100.0	25.0	33.3	

Unit 11 Elder Sheep (FS1104)

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026*
20Permits Issued	32	34	38	34	38	26	25	22	30	25	
Individuals Hunting	12	13	18	14	12	12	10	11	10	11	
Animals Harvested	3	4	1	1	1	3	2	3	4	2	
Success Rate (%)	25.0	30.8	5.6	7.1	8.3	25.0	20.0	27.3	40.0	18.2	

Unit 11 Elder/Junior Sheep (FS1103)

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026*
Permits Issued	1	2	1	0	1	1	2	1	2	0	
Individuals Hunting	1	2	0	-	0	0	0	0	2	0	
Animals Harvested	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	
Success Rate (%)	0.0	0.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.0	-	

Unit 12 Caribou -- Chisana (FC1205) -- Closed in 2022 due to conservation concerns

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026*
Permits Issued	8	8	6	4	7	5	n/a	6	8	7	
Individuals Hunting	8	3	3	3	4	1	n/a	5	4	3	
Animals Harvested	1	0	2	1	3	0	n/a	2	2	0	
Success Rate (%)	12.5	0.0	66.7	33.3	75.0	0.0	n/a	40.0	50.0	0.0	

Table 1. Federal Subsistence Registration Permits in Wrangell-St. Elias NPP, 2015-2025 (cont.)

Unit 12 Elder Sheep (FS1201)

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026*
Permits Issued	11	12	14	14	12	13	8	11	9	10	
Individuals Hunting	6	4	8	6	4	6	4	5	1	2	
Animals Harvested	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	
Success Rate (%)	16.7	25.0	0.0	0.0	25.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	

Unit 12 Elder/Junior Sheep (FS1204)

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026*
Permits Issued	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	
Individuals Hunting	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	0	0	
Animals Harvested	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Success Rate (%)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	

Source: Federal Subsistence Permit Database.

* 2026 data given as part of the oral report.

Note: Success rate is calculated based on the number of individuals hunting, not total permits issued.

Traditional Knowledge, Ethnographic, and Subsistence Projects:

Work is underway on several traditional knowledge, ethnographic and subsistence projects, with most of the work being carried out by project partners through cooperative agreements.

Outer Coast Ethnographic Landscape Study: In coordination with staff from the Yakutat Tlingit Tribe (YTT), Native Village of Eyak (NVE), and Portland State University (PSU), park staff are working on documenting coastal resources at risk at being lost due to changes along the coastline. In March 2026, elders and staff from Cordova travelled to Yakutat for discussions about the coast. Another discussion event is planned for November 2026 with elders and staff from Yakutat travelling to Cordova.

Ahtna Ethnographic Overview and Assessment (EOA): This baseline cultural anthropology study includes an annotated inventory of ethnographic and related materials relevant to the Ahtna Athabascans; a narrative synopsis of our current understanding of these materials, with a focus on connections to Wrangell-St. Elias; and a discussion of data gaps and additional research needs. This project was completed through a cooperative agreement with the Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission. An electronic copy of the report can be downloaded from the park's website (www.nps.gov/WRST) under the tab "Learn About the Park"/ "History and Culture"/ "People"/ "[Ahtna and Wrangell-St. Elias: An Ethnographic Overview and Assessment.](#)"

Copper River Salmon In-Season Teleconferences: During summer 2026, weekly teleconferences hosted by AITRC with funding from Wrangell-St. Elias provided a venue for Copper River subsistence fishers to share firsthand knowledge about Copper River salmon harvests and returns along with river conditions and other factors that may affect harvests and returns with one another as well as agency staff. Biologists and fisheries managers also shared information on run timing and strength, management strategies, and various Copper River fisheries research and monitoring projects. This multi-year project will continue in summer 2027, and people fishing on the Copper River are encouraged to participate. Summaries from the previous calls can be found at the project website: <https://www.ahtnatribal.org/teleconferences>.

Alternative Harvest Monitoring Methodology: This project aims to develop a new methodology to fill in the gaps between comprehensive community harvest assessments by documenting a series of exploratory subsistence life histories to understand how harvesting and sharing of subsistence resources changes over a lifetime. The ethnographic data on sharing among local, rural people will inform the development of a network analysis methodology. In addition to interviews, a literature review will be compiled of existing social network analysis work in Alaska. The analysis of the interviews, the literature review, and the creation of a methodology framework will be presented in a summary report. This project is in cooperation with AITRC and is looking for participants for interviews.

Interested in staying up to date on subsistence issues at Wrangell-St. Elias? Email wrst_subsistence@nps.gov to be added to the subsistence listserv.



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Fall 2026 Fisheries Report **Amber Cohen, acting Subsistence Program Lead** **Erin Drumm, Seasonal Fisheries Biologist** Amber_Cohen@nps.gov, 907-822-7284

SUMMARY OF KEY UPDATES

- WRST hired a seasonal fisheries biologist, Erin Drumm, who onboarded in May, and worked on assisting Tanada Creek Weir, installing Long Lake Weir, and provided key updates during the Copper River run.
- Tanada Creek Weir, managed by the Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission, was installed on June 22.
- Long Lake weir, managed by Prince William Sound Science Center, was installed on July 30.
- Fieldwork occurred this summer to inventory of harvestable freshwater fish in waters of Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve (WRST).
- Federal harvest opportunities continued throughout the 2026 season. No restrictions were enacted by the Federal in-season manager.
- Miles Lake sonar estimated a season total passage of 570,391 salmon (through July 28). 19,255 Chinook salmon were counted through the Miles Lake sonar (through July 26).
- Upper Copper River Federal subsistence fishery permits issued:
 - 219 in the Chitina Subdistrict,
 - 291 in the Glennallen Subdistrict,
 - and 4 Batzulnetas permits.
- Historical Federal subsistence harvests in the Upper Copper River through 2026¹ are provided in Tables 1-4.
- Federal subsistence fishery in the Lower Copper River; 192 permits were issued with a total in-season harvest of 1,417 Sockeye Salmon and 18 Chinook Salmon (reported through August 3rd, 2026).
- Due to the 2025 regulatory change in the State management plans for the Copper River District commercial fishery and Chitina personal use fishery, the commercial fishery opened on May 22, and the Chitina personal use fishery opened on June 10. Chinook salmon harvest remained closed in the Chitina personal use fishery.
- Wrangell-St. Elias collaborated with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Native Village of Eyak, AITRC, and other stakeholders throughout the 2026 Copper River run.

¹ 2026 data is preliminary up to 9/14/2026 and will be updated for the winter fisheries report.

FISHERIES RESEARCH AND MONITORING PROJECTS

Tanada Creek Salmon Weir

This year, funding through the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program had been transferred to the Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission (AITRC) to operate the Tanada Creek salmon weir located at Batzulnetas. Weir installation was completed on June 22, and it will be taken down towards the end of September.

Long Lake Salmon Weir

Prince William Sound Science Center assumed operation of the Long Lake fish weir in 2019. This year, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve provided additional support for the installation and maintenance of the weir. Installation of the weir was completed on July 30, and it will be taken down in mid-October.

Inventory of harvestable fish in select waters of Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve to inform stewardship

Dan Gorze, AITRC fisheries biologist, is the primary investigator for this project which will document the presence, distribution, size, relative abundance, and general habitat conditions of species such as arctic grayling, burbot, Dolly Varden, lake trout, rainbow trout, and whitefish in several lakes across Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve. At least ten sites have been chosen for inventory. This is in conjunction with the NPS Inventory Program which assists with a detailed implementation plan and facilitates project progress. This project kicked off with a meeting in June 2025. Fieldwork occurred throughout summer 2026.

Salmon Stream Temperature Monitoring

Wrangell St.-Elias National Park initiated a long-term temperature monitoring project on a series of anadromous streams within the park, which will provide valuable data to better understand basin-wide temperature regimes and their influence on different salmon stocks.

UPPER COPPER RIVER FISHERIES

2026 Copper River Salmon Run Strength and Management Actions

Federal managers monitored run strength indices throughout the season to evaluate the need for appropriate fisheries management actions. No Federal Special Actions were issued by the in-season manager in the fisheries of the Copper River Drainage. Federal harvest opportunities continued throughout the season.

Regulatory changes in State management plans for the Copper River District commercial fishery and Chitina personal use fishery took effect in 2025 and continued in 2026. The commercial fishery opened on May 22. The Chitina personal use fishery opened on June 10. It remained closed to the retention of Chinook salmon for the season. The Copper River District commercial fishery manager often initiated the Expanded Inside Chinook Salmon Closure Area and limited hours for openers out of concern for Chinook salmon as well.

The season total commercial harvest for the Copper River District through August 11 is reported to include 242,799 Sockeye salmon (a decrease of 595,838 salmon from 2025), and 4,247 Chinook salmon (a decrease of 1,245 salmon from 2025).

The ADFG sonar at Miles Lake (located just downstream of the Million Dollar Bridge in the Copper River) discontinued operation on July 28. A total of 570,391 salmon were estimated in migration upstream for the season. The season passage estimate is 5% below the July 28 lower cumulative management objective of 600,897 salmon.

2026 Upper Copper River Federal Subsistence Fishing Season, Permits, and Historical Harvests

The Federal subsistence salmon fisheries of the Upper Copper River are open from May 15 through September 30. WRST issued 218 Chitina Subdistrict, 291 Glennallen Subdistrict, and 4 Batzulnetas permits. Tables 1 through 4 show historical reported and expanded harvests for the Federal subsistence fisheries in each subdistrict through the 2025 season and initial 2026 harvest reports. Updated data will be presented in the spring 2027 fisheries report.

2026 Lower Copper River Federal Subsistence Fishery

The Federal subsistence salmon fishery in the Lower Copper River near Cordova is open from June 1 through September 30. (see Table 5). 192 permits were issued with a total in-season harvest of 1,417 Sockeye Salmon and 18 Chinook Salmon (reported through August 3rd, 2026).

Table 1. Federal Subsistence Fish Harvest in All Upper Copper River Fisheries, including Harvest by Gear Type¹

Year	Expanded Harvest Estimates ²						All Species, Approximate Harvest by Gear Type					
	Steelhead/			Fish			Fish			Fish		
	Sockeye	Chinook	Coho	Rainbow Trout	Other Species	Total Harvest	Wheel %	Total	Dip Net %	Dip Net Total	Rod and Reel %	Rod and Reel Total
2002	10,933	745	20	77	N.A.	11,775						
2003	17,393	687	259	16	N.A.	18,355						
2004	24,217	815	216	15	N.A.	25,264						
2005	24,781	412	55	7	37	25,292						
2006	20,737	507	55	17	37	21,353						
2007	19,108	704	85	7	25	19,929						
2008	14,865	892	268	21	54	16,100						
2009	14,821	590	52	22	36	15,521						
2010	17,156	362	111	46	25	17,700	90.3%	15,978	9.6%	1,697	0.1%	25
2011	18,214	814	70	6	283	19,387	88.4%	17,142	11.4%	2,206	0.2%	39
2012	17,297	410	93	45	113	17,958	90.4%	16,228	9.4%	1,684	0.3%	45
2013	20,850	396	36	8	93	21,382	85.9%	18,369	14.1%	3,013	0.0%	0
2014	25,659	456	97	14	57	26,284	89.3%	23,458	10.8%	2,825	0.0%	3
2015	29,157	430	29	15	218	29,849	90.1%	26,900	9.7%	2,883	0.2%	66
2016	21,106	465	52	6	406	22,035	90.0%	19,820	10.0%	2,197	0.1%	18
2017	20,497	485	10	8	549	21,550	96.2%	20,724	3.7%	804	0.1%	19
2018	20,634	2,763	31	4	45	23,476	83.4%	19,579	16.5%	3,878	0.1%	19
2019	22,302	1,025	22	3	59	23,411	79.0%	18,485	21.0%	4,909	0.1%	16
2020	16,337	837	26	7	60	17,266	75.9%	13,098	24.1%	4,159	0.1%	9
2021	20,481	610	3	6	32	21,132	70.8%	14,951	29.2%	6,175	0.0%	6
2022	17,489	994	45	16	60	18,603	80.2%	14,919	19.8%	3,676	0.0%	7
2023	21,364	823	15	11	19	22,231	70.6%	15,695	29.4%	6,536	0.0%	1
2024	21,504	550	1	0	21	22,076	77.5%	17,109	22.5%	4,967	0.0%	0
2025	18,442	438	84	0	10	18,974	75.0%	14,230	25.0%	4,743	0.0%	0
2026	20,130	959	61	4	21	21,176	63.0%	3,167	37.0%	1,834	0.0%	0
5-yr. Avg. 2021-2025	19,856	683	30	6	28	20,603	74.8%	15,381	25.2%	5,219	0.0%	2
10-yr. Avg. 2016-2025	20,015	899	29	6	126	21,075	79.8%	16,861	20.1%	4,204	0.0%	9

¹ This table reflects entries to the online database from 2011 through **9/14/2026**. Data prior to 2011 relies on NPS records. Data for all years subject to changes resulting from entry error corrections.

² Expanded Harvest estimate derived from a basic, direct ratio expansion based on the percentage of permits that reported.

Table 2. Glennallen Subdistrict Federal Reported and Expanded Subsistence Fishery Harvests¹

Year	Percentage			Sockeye			Chinook			Coho			Steelhead/Rainbow Trout			Other Species			All Species		
	Permits Issued	Reported	Harvest	Reported Harvest Estimate ²	Harvest Estimate ²	Harvest	Reported Harvest Estimate ²	Harvest Estimate ²	Harvest	Reported Harvest Estimate ²	Harvest Estimate ²	Harvest	Reported Harvest Estimate ²	Harvest Estimate ²	Harvest	Reported Harvest Estimate ²	Harvest Estimate ²	Harvest	Total Harvest Estimate ²		
2002	201	80.6	8,009	9,937	700	564	16	20	62	77	35	43	10,777								
2003	221	83.3	13,623	16,354	665	554	145	174	13	16	20	24	17,233								
2004	261	78.9	17,704	22,439	806	636	152	193	12	15	12	15	23,468								
2005	267	85.8	19,973	23,279	331	386	47	55	6	7	32	37	23,763								
2006	254	87.4	16,711	19,120	430	492	28	32	15	17	32	37	19,698								
2007	281	84.3	15,225	18,060	675	569	34	40	6	7	21	25	18,808								
2008	269	81.4	11,347	13,940	866	705	148	182	17	21	44	54	15,063								
2009	274	85.0	11,836	13,925	581	494	34	40	19	22	31	36	14,605								
2010	269	87.7	12,849	14,651	342	300	64	73	39	44	22	25	15,136								
2011	277	87.7	14,163	16,145	799	701	53	60	5	6	248	283	17,293								
2012	275	92.0	14,461	15,718	403	371	78	85	40	43	104	113	16,363								
2013	273	89.0	15,834	17,789	372	331	24	27	6	7	62	70	18,264								
2014	315	90.5	21,603	23,877	441	399	23	25	10	11	52	57	24,412								
2015	325	92.3	24,695	26,753	416	384	13	14	7	8	201	218	27,408								
2016	320	82.8	15,884	19,181	446	369	9	11	5	6	332	401	20,044								
2017	338	85.2	15,691	18,415	468	399	1	1	7	8	468	549	19,442								
2018	335	91.3	15,287	16,736	2,662	2,432	0	0	4	4	41	45	19,448								
2019	343	90.1	15,873	17,620	942	849	0	0	3	3	53	59	18,624								
2020	376	90.7	11,456	12,632	752	682	0	0	6	7	54	60	13,450								
2021	355	86.5	13,117	15,168	502	434	0	0	5	6	28	32	15,708								
2022	297	83.5	12,133	14,530	890	743	2	2	13	16	48	57	15,495								
2023	290	85.2	12,971	15,229	672	572	8	9	9	11	16	19	15,939								
2024	293	80.9	14,170	17,518	457	370	0	0	0	0	16	20	17,995								
2025	323	97.5	13,511	13,854	360	351	22	23	0	0	10	10	14,247								
2026	291	23.4	3,056	13,078	757	177	0	0	1	4	5	21	13,861								
5-yr. Avg. 2021-2025	312	87	13,180	15,260	494	494	6	7	5	6	24	28	15,877								
10-yr. Avg. 2016-2025	327	87	14,009	16,088	720	720	4	5	5	6	107	125	17,039								

¹ This table reflects entries to the online database from 2011 through 9/14/2026. Data prior to 2011 relies on NPS records. Data for all years subject to changes resulting from entry error corrections.

² Expanded Harvest estimate derived from a basic, direct ratio expansion based on the percentage of permits that reported.

Table 3. Chitina Subdistrict Federal Reported and Expanded Subsistence Fishery Harvests¹

Year	Percentage										Sockeye		Chinook		Coho		Steelhead/Rainbow Trout		Other Species		All Species	
	Permits Issued		Reported		Harvest		Harvest Estimate ²		Reported		Harvest		Harvest Estimate ²		Reported		Harvest		Harvest Estimate ²		Total Harvest Estimate ²	
2002	122	73.0	575	788	33	45	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N.A.	N.A.	833				
2003	100	82.0	717	874	18	22	70	85	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N.A.	N.A.	982				
2004	109	76.1	1,215	1,597	7	9	18	24	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N.A.	N.A.	1,629				
2005	76	84.2	1,265	1,502	22	26	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,529				
2006	75	85.3	1,379	1,617	13	15	20	23	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,655				
2007	98	88.8	929	1,046	26	29	40	45	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,120				
2008	82	85.4	789	924	22	26	74	87	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,036				
2009	68	91.2	817	896	8	9	11	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	917				
2010	92	85.9	2,061	2,399	17	20	33	38	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,459				
2011	85	85.9	1,766	2,056	13	15	8	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,081				
2012	89	93.3	1,332	1,427	6	6	8	9	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,443				
2013	99	90.9	1,999	2,199	17	19	8	9	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,239				
2014	113	94.7	1,549	1,636	14	15	68	72	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,726				
2015	111	92.8	2,231	2,404	13	14	14	15	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,441				
2016	128	80.5	1,549	1,925	16	20	33	41	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	5	1,991				
2017	132	79.5	1,454	1,828	12	15	7	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,852				
2018	132	91.7	3,144	3,430	92	100	28	31	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,561				
2019	181	90.6	4,053	4,473	75	83	20	22	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4,578				
2020	215	89.3	3,249	3,638	76	85	23	26	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,749				
2021	194	91.8	4,765	5,193	99	108	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5,304				
2022	177	87.6	2,555	2,918	91	104	37	42	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	3,066				
2023	196	86.7	5,138	5,924	131	151	5	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6,081				
2024	202	88.6	3,461	3,906	82	93	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,999				
2025	251	97.6	4,185	4,287	76	78	60	61	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4,427				
2026	219	22.8	1,610	7,052	46	201	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7,253				
5-yr. Avg. 2021-2025	204	90	4,021	4,446	96	84	21	23	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4,575				
10-yr. Avg. 2016-2025	181	88	3,355	3,752	75	84	22	24	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	3,861				

¹ This table reflects entries to the online database from 2011 through **9/14/2026**. Data prior to 2011 relies on NPS records. Data for all years subject to changes resulting from entry error corrections.

² Expanded Harvest estimate derived from a basic, direct ratio expansion based on the percentage of permits that reported.

Table 4. Batzulnetas Federal Reported and Expanded Subsistence Fishery Harvests¹

Year	Sockeye		Chinook		Other Species	
	Percentage		Reported Harvest	Harvest Estimate ²	Reported Harvest	Harvest Estimate ²
	Permits Issued	of Permits Reported				
2001	1	100	62	62	0	0
2002	1	100.0	208	208	0	0
2003	1	100.0	164	164	0	0
2004	1	100.0	182	182	0	0
2005	1	100.0	0	0	0	0
2006	0	N.A.	0	0	0	0
2007	1	100.0	1	1	0	0
2008	1	100.0	1	1	0	0
2009	0	N.A.	0	0	0	0
2010	3	100.0	106	106	0	0
2011	3	66.7	9	14	0	0
2012	3	66.7	101	152	0	0
2013	3	100.0	862	862	5	5
2014	2	100.0	146	146	0	0
2015	4	100.0	0	0	0	0
2016	0	N.A.	0	0	0	0
2017	1	100.0	254	254	2	2
2018	1	100.0	468	468	0	0
2019	1	100.0	209	209	0	0
2020	1	100.0	67	67	0	0
2021	1	100.0	120	120	0	0
2022	2	100.0	41	41	0	0
2023	2	100.0	211	211	0	0
2024	2	100.0	80	80	0	0
2025	3	100.0	300	300	0	0
2026	0	0.0	0	0	0	0
5-yr. Avg. 2021-2025	2	100	150	150	0	0
10-yr. Avg. 2016-2025	1	100	175	175	0	0

¹ This table reflects entries to the online database from 2011 through 9/14/2026. Data prior to 2011 relies on NPS records. Data for all years subject to changes resulting from entry error corrections.

² Expanded Harvest estimate derived from a basic, direct ratio expansion based on the percentage of permits that reported.

Table 5: Lower Copper River Federal Subsistence Fishery Permits Issued and Harvest by Year

Year	Permits Issued	Sockeye Harvest	Chinook Harvest	Coho Harvest
2022	69	104	3	
2023	71	197	4	
2024	88	425	2	
2025	146	905	21	3
2026*	192	1,417	18	

Source: Chugach National Forest

*Harvest data as of 9/14/2026



WRANGELL-ST. ELIAS NATIONAL PARK AND PRESERVE WILDLIFE REPORT UPDATE

Fall 2026

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Mentasta Caribou Herd Monitoring

- An estimated 280 adult caribou (90% CI: 229-380) were observed during the population survey conducted on June 24, 2026 (Table 1).
- A composition survey is scheduled for late September 2026 to assess calf-bull-cow ratios.
- Thirty-seven GPS collars are currently deployed on Mentasta caribou.
- During 2026 and 2027, a project is underway to analyze data on changing herd overlap among the Mentasta, Nelchina, and Chisana caribou herds within Wrangell-St. Elias National Park.

Table 1. Population parameters for the Mentasta caribou herd.

Year	Estimated Adults (90% CI)	Calf:Cow Ratio	Bull:Cow Ratio
2017	285 (237-385)	20	87
2018	349 (289-475)	22	92
2019	335 (277-459)	28	95
2020	642 (545-833)	-	-
2021	470 (388-629)	12	20
2023	258 (203-374)	-	-
2024	189 (148-278)	26	33
2025	162 (137-227)	40	132
2026	280 (229-380)	-	-

Chisana Caribou Herd Monitoring

- A coordinated population survey of the Chisana caribou herd will be conducted in mid-October 2026 with ADF&G and Environment Canada.
- The fall 2025 composition survey showed above-average calf-to-cow (3-year avg = 25) and bull-to-cow (3-year avg = 37) ratios, supporting a limited bulls-only subsistence hunt.
- Thirty-five GPS collars and twelve VHF collars are currently deployed on Chisana caribou.

Moose Monitoring

- An analysis and article are nearing completion that assess how extreme snow events influence the spatial and temporal patterns of moose distribution within parts of Wrangell-St. Elias.
- A moose population survey is planned for November 2026, with results expected in spring 2026.

Dall's Sheep

- Sheep surveys were completed across a five-million-acre area in the southern Wrangell, University, St. Elias, and Chugach ranges in July 2026 (Figure 1).
- A total of 143 ten-mile transects were flown by three aircraft over nine days, totaling 81 survey hours, and roughly 1,250 individual sheep were classified by sex and age.
- Results will be available in spring 2027.
- These Park-wide sheep surveys will inform whether an observed snow-gradient is influencing changes in sheep populations relative to the 2010-2011 baseline period.

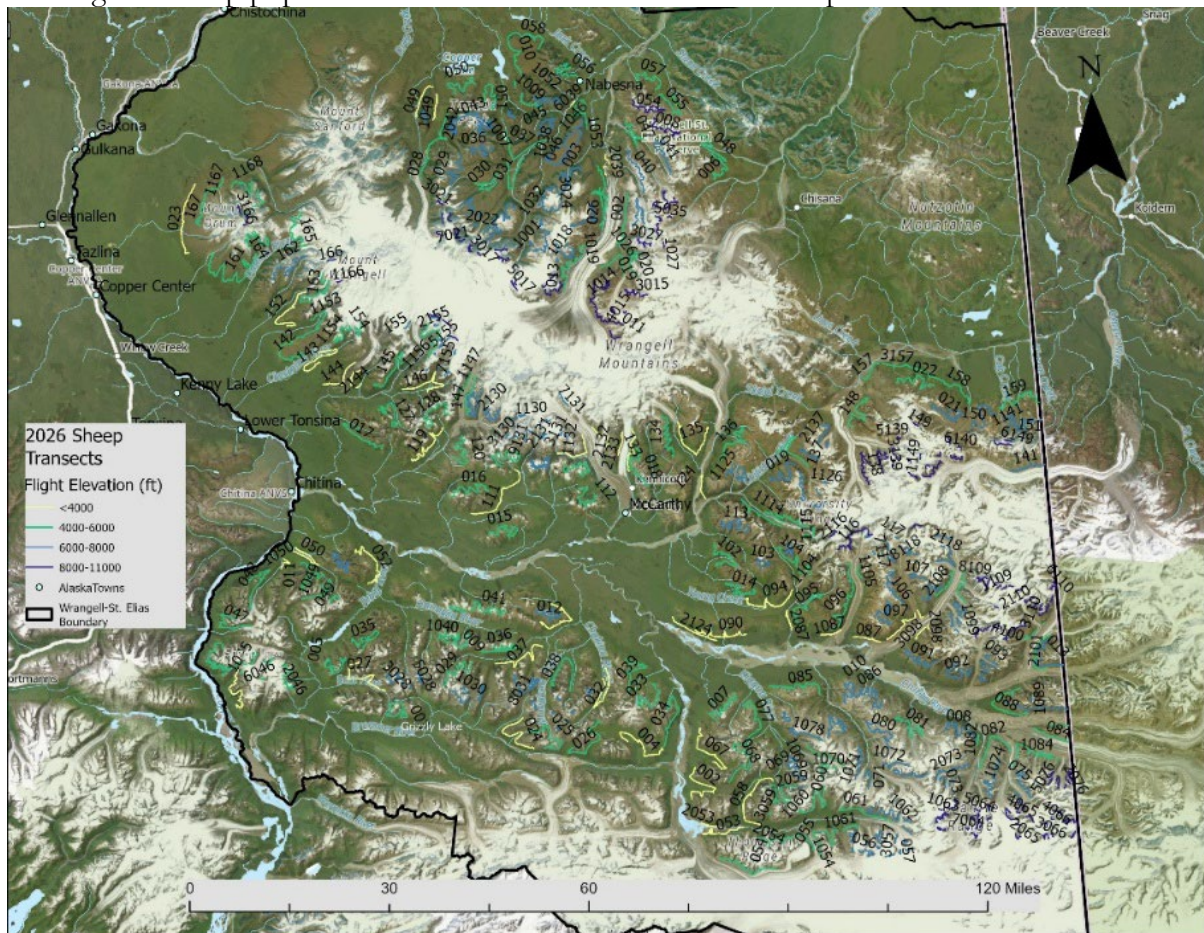


Figure 1. Wrangell-St. Elias Dall's Sheep Survey Area, 2026.

Microplastic on the Malaspina and Yakutat Forelands

- Shorebirds are being used as early-warning indicators of coastal ecosystem health.
- In May 2026, work continued to assess plastic pollution levels and potential impacts on coastal areas of the Park.
- From May 9-18, 2026, shorebirds were captured and their tissues (feces, blood) collected to evaluate possible plastic contamination.
- A total of 11 shorebirds across three species were captured, and 196 fecal samples from six species were collected by observing discrete flocks of migrating birds.
- Samples are currently being processed by a collaborator at Auburn University to determine the presence, concentration, type, and size of plastics in the collected tissues.



Figure 2. A captured Dunlin (left), mist-netting shorebirds at night (middle), and collection of shorebird fecal samples for microplastic testing on the Yakutat and Malaspina Forelands, Wrangell-St. Elias.

Foraging Dynamics of Apex Predators on Subsistence Resources - Interior Copper and Chitina Rivers, and Coastal Malaspina Forelands

- In 2026, efforts began to examine bald eagle and bear foraging patterns along the Copper and Chitina Rivers and the coastal Malaspina Forelands.
- Over 400 river miles were rafted and 25 miles hiked to collect eagle and bear scat and hair samples for diet analysis.
- This monitoring aims to quantify the diets of the region's two primary apex predators and understand how they use shifting resources across seasons to inform management decisions.
- During summer 2026, we deployed small (1x1m²) tarps near 17 occupied eagle nests and set 24 bear hair sampler along the Copper and Chitina Rivers and the Malaspina Forelands (Figure 3). A total of 151 hair samples were collected and are currently being processed to evaluate the use of various subsistence food sources.

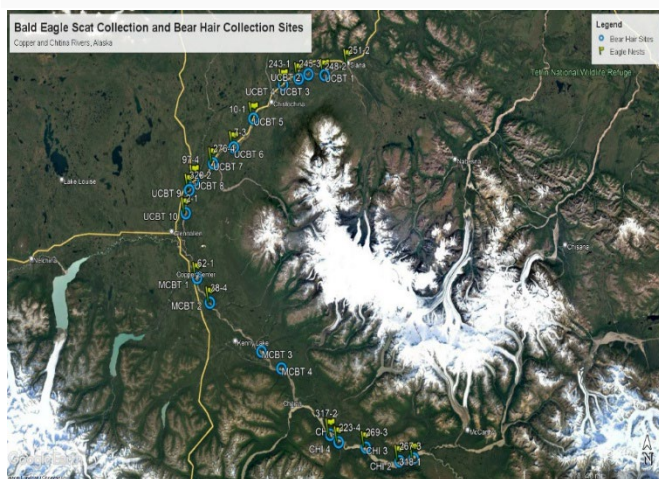


Figure 3. Bald eagle and bear hair sampling sites (left) and a coastal hair-sampling site in Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve.