

FISHERIES UPDATE FOR THE WEEK OF JULY 27 – AUGUST 2, 2021. Report #10

Compiled by George Pappas - (907) 317-2165, George.Pappas@fws.gov Office of Subsistence Management, USFWS.

The purpose of the weekly fisheries update is to provide the reader with an overall summary of the status of subsistence related fisheries throughout the state of Alaska. The target audience is the Federal Subsistence Board and its Staff Committee. The report was compiled with the assistance of the Federal in-season managers and OSM staff that provided weekly updated information by the close of business on Friday of the reporting week. My goal is to have the report sent by the close of business the following Monday. Web links have been included to provide additional information. You may obtain additional information on a fishery of particular interest by contacting the in-season manager, provided contacts, follow the provided web links, or contact me.

SOUTHEAST ALASKA

Sitka and Hoonah Area – Justin Koller, Forest Service, Tongass National Forest
Justin Koller, (907)747-4297 justin.koller@usda.gov

Herring – A commercial herring fishery occurred in Sitka Sound in 2021. Please see this [summary of Sitka Sound herring 2021](#). Also, [summary of southeast Alaska herring 2021](#).

Falls Lake - The Forest Service and the Organized Village of Kake operate the Falls Lake trap and video net weir which was operational as of June 25. As of July 31, 213 sockeye have been counted in the trap and about 200 have been harvested. The current estimated escapement to-date is about 600. The final escapement estimate in 2020 was 800 Sockeye Salmon while the final subsistence and sport harvest in the marine terminal area was estimated to be 253. Subsistence harvest accounted for 96% of terminal area harvest.

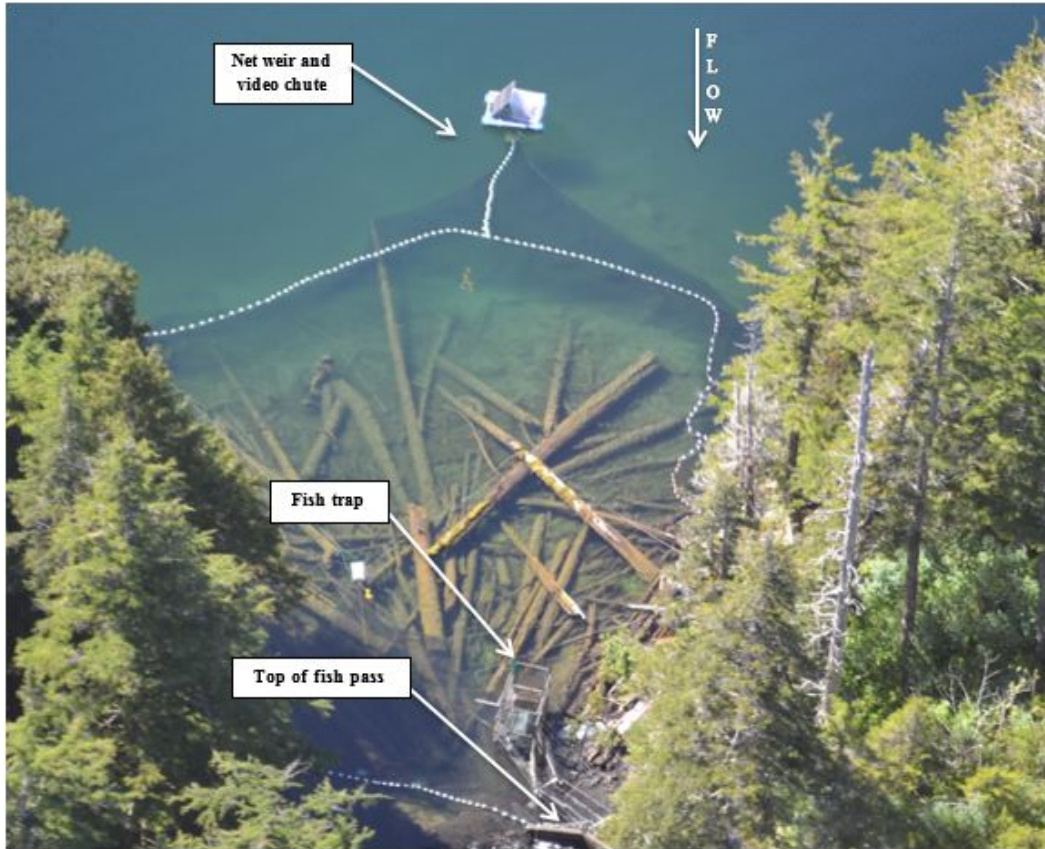


Figure 1. Aerial photo of the Falls Lake outlet illustrating the typical location of weir equipment.

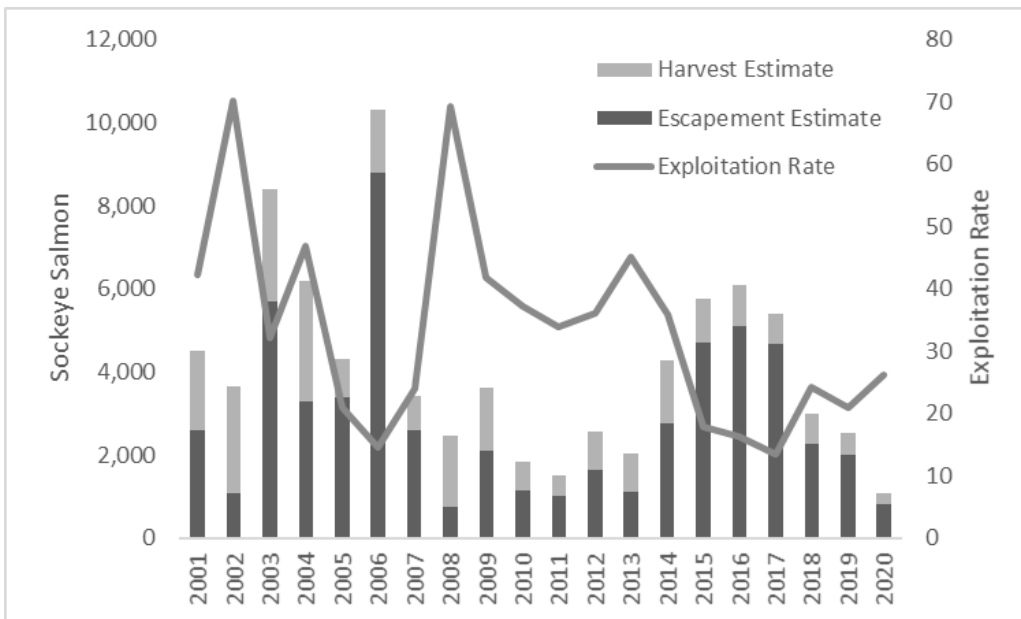


Figure 2. Escapement plus harvest equals total terminal run of Sockeye Salmon at Falls Lake, 2001-2020.

Klag Bay - The Sitka Tribe of Alaska operates the Sockeye Salmon monitoring weir at Klag Bay which is was installed June 30. As of July 31, 154 sockeye have been counted at the weir and 1,469 have been harvested. Sockeye escapement is flow dependent at Klag Bay and there has been no appreciable precipitation to increase discharge in the stream. In 2020, approximately 4,122 sockeye migrated past the weir while an estimated 1,599 were harvested in the marine terminal area subsistence and sport fishery. Subsistence harvest accounted for over 99% of terminal area harvest.

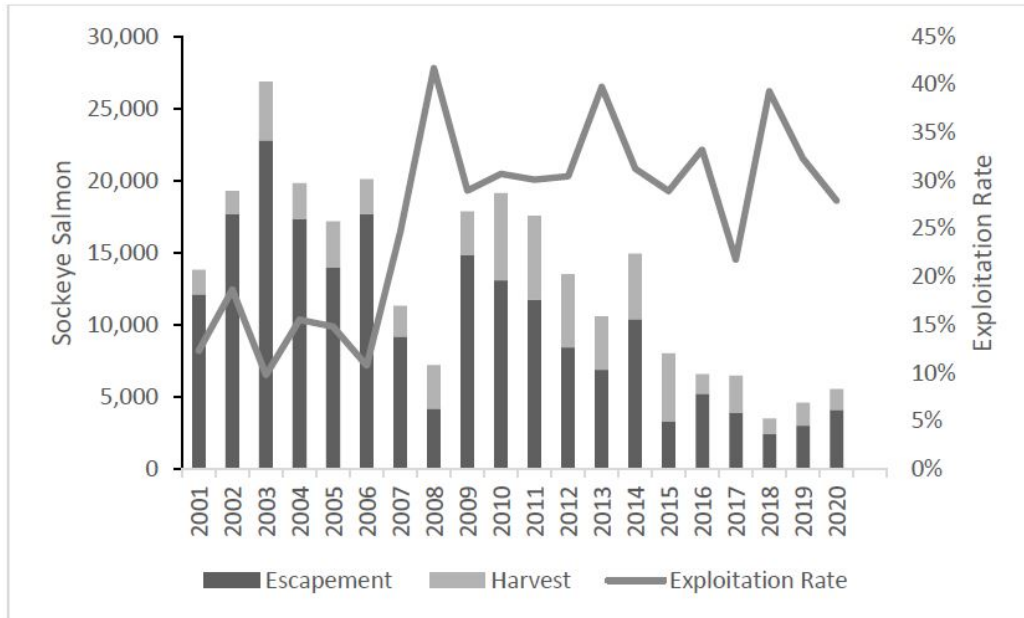


Figure 3. Creel survey harvest and escapement for Klag Lake Sockeye Salmon, 2001-2020.

Redoubt Lake - The Forest Service operates the Redoubt Lake weir which was operational as of June 15. As of August 1, 33,103 sockeye have entered the lake. We are predicting that over 50,000 sockeye will pass through the weir this year. On July 10, in accordance with the Redoubt Lake Management Plan, the individual/household subsistence sockeye possession limit was set at 25 and the individual/household annual limit was set at 100. Many people are fishing for sockeye in Redoubt Bay and reporting good success. There have been several commercial seine openings in Redoubt Bay but no participation. In 2020, an estimated 41,279 Sockeye Salmon passed through the weir into Redoubt Lake. Over 40,000 sockeye were harvested in Sitka Sound commercial fishery openings throughout the 2020 season. Most of these sockeye are probably of Redoubt origin.

[News release, sockeye limits 2021](#)

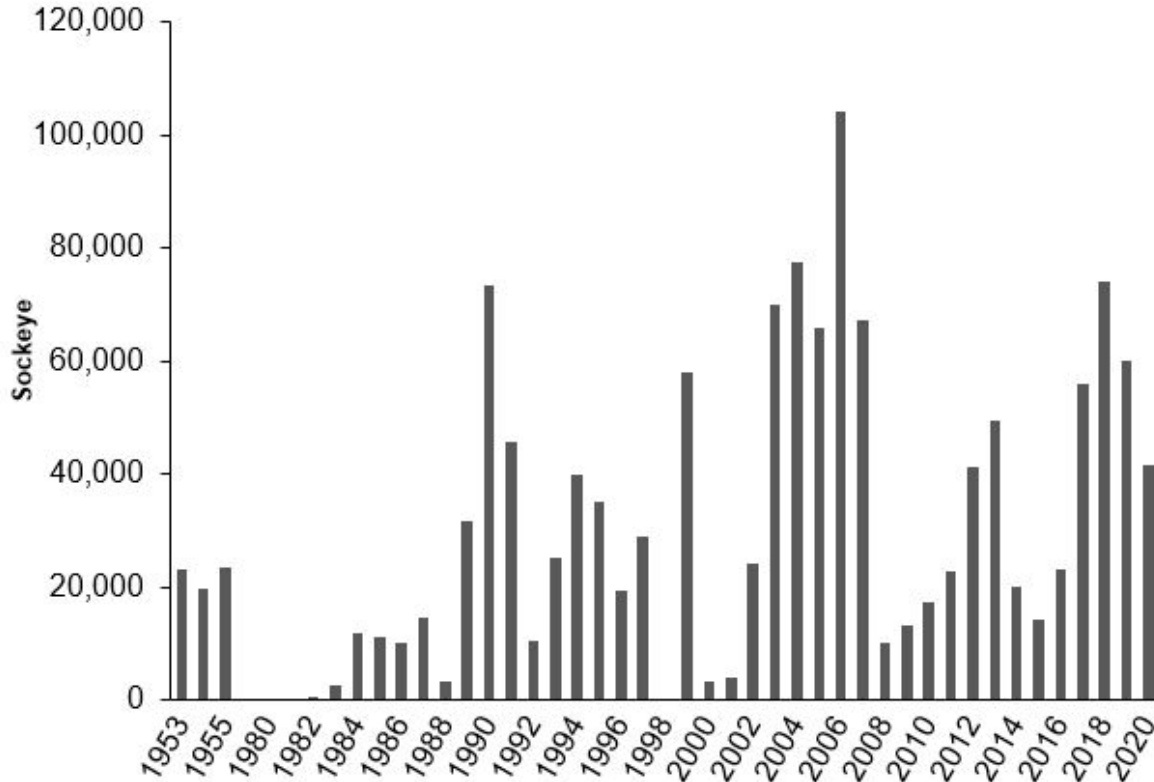


Figure 4. Annual Sockeye Salmon expanded escapement into Redoubt Lake for years with data: 1953 to 1955, 1982 to 1997, and 1999 to 2019. The weir was not operated in 1998.

Gut Bay - The Forest Service and the Organized Village of Kake monitor escapement and harvest of Gut Bay Sockeye Salmon. Gut Bay is located south of Falls Lake on Baranof Island and an important source of sockeye for the village of Kake. Very little is known about the magnitude of this sockeye run. In 2019, 881 sockeye were counted at the weir and about 200 were harvested in the state subsistence fishery. The Gut Bay project has been postponed until 2022 due to staffing shortages. Word is harvesters are catching a good amount of sockeye this year at Gut Bay.

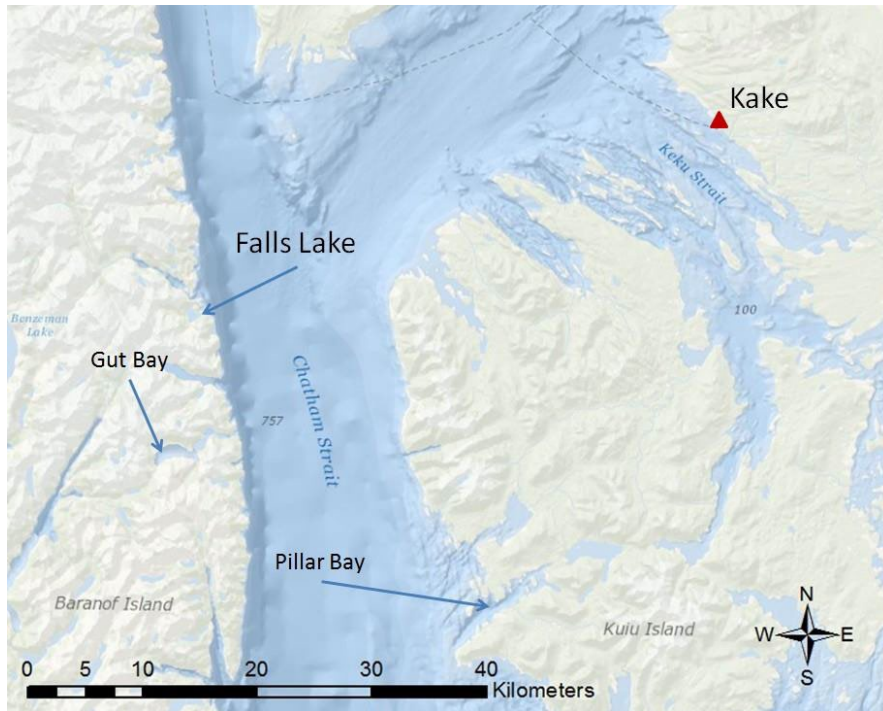


Figure 5. Location of Gut Bay in relation to Falls Lake and the village of Kake

Petersburg and Wrangell Area – Robert Cross, Forest Service, Tongass National Forest Robert Cross, (907)772-5944 robert.cross@usda.gov

The pre-season terminal run forecast for large Chinook Salmon in the Stikine River is 9,900 fish. This forecast is below the bottom range of the 14,000 to 28,000 fish goal. Directed commercial, sport, and subsistence fisheries in the area have been closed to protect this return. Currently, all drift gillnet, purse seine and non-terminal harvest area troll fisheries are closed in district 8.

The 2021 Stikine River pre-season Sockeye Salmon forecast is 56,000 fish, with 28,000 Tahltan and 28,000 Mainstem fish. The 2020 Sockeye Salmon forecast was 103,400 fish, which included 64,500 Tahltan Lake and 38,900 Mainstem Sockeye. The escapement objective for Tahltan bound Sockeye Salmon is 18,000 and 30,000 for Mainstem fish. The 2021 forecast is below the escapement objective for the mainstem and may result in a season closure.

The 2021 Federal Stikine River Sockeye Salmon subsistence fishery began June 21. High water slowed harvest effort during the first two weeks of the fishery. However, Sockeye harvest rates began increasing over the July 4th weekend and have remained steady throughout the remainder of the fishery. A total of 97 Stikine River permits and 29 general salmon permits have been issued for the area and no harvest estimates are available at this time.

Yakutat, Juneau, and Admiralty areas of Northern Southeast Alaska - Jake Musslewhite (907-789-6256; jgmusslewhite@fs.fed.us), Forest Service, Tongass National Forest

Neva Lake Sockeye Salmon: A Forest Service crew installed the Neva Lake weir on June 18, 2021. This swim-through video weir is located near Excursion Inlet, and is maintained by a Hoonah Indian Association crew living onsite. As of July 27, 1,061 Sockeye have been counted through the weir. We are at about the halfway point of the run, so the projected total escapement is around 2,000 fish for the season, lower than we would hope for. However, water levels have been low so there may be a fair number of fish holding and waiting for rain. Live video and clips from the weir can be accessed at <http://nevalake.ddns.net:81>. However, internet access to the weir is temporarily down, so live video may not be available until service is restored.



Figure 1. Live video capture of a Dolly Varden swimming through the Neva Lake weir, July 19, 2021.

Sitkoh Lake Sockeye Salmon: The Sitkoh Lake weir was installed by a Forest Service crew over July 6-8, 2021 (Figure 2). The weir project is a partnership between the USFS and the Angoon Community Association (ACA). Live video from the site is streamed to the ACA office in Angoon, where it is recorded on a computer and returning Sockeye are counted by ACA employees. Live video is currently not available to the public, but will be soon.



Figure 2. The Sitkoh Lake weir, located at the outlet of Sitkoh Lake.

Northern Inside water salmon fisheries: Salmon fisheries throughout the northern inside waters have continued their disappointing showing in recent weeks. Both effort and catch of Sockeye and Chum salmon in District 11 and 15 gillnet fisheries have been below 10-year averages. The purse seine fisheries on the Hawk Inlet and Admiralty shorelines have opened for Pink salmon directed openers, but catches have been relatively weak. Field reports from subsistence fishers targeting Sockeye have been sporadic, but a few encouraging reports have dribbled in.

Prince of Wales and Ketchikan District Area – TBA, Forest Service, Tongass National Forest. (907) 826-1649

USFS Weekly Summary Author position vacant - TBA.

Southeast Alaska Web Links

Tongass National Forest News Room <http://www.fs.usda.gov/news/tongass/news-events>

Federal Subsistence Fisheries Regulations for Southeastern Alaska Area
http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish_shell/upload/Southeast.pdf

ADF&G Sport and Personal Use Fishing News Release and Emergency Order Link
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/EONR/index.cfm?ADFG=region.R1>

ADF&G Commercial Fisheries News Release and Emergency Order Link
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.main>

Weekly ADF&G Sport Fishing Reports for Southeast Alaska
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/FishingReports/index.cfm?ADFG=R1.home>

Statewide ADF&G Fish counts
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/FishCounts/>

SOUTHCENTRAL ALASKA

PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND – COPPER RIVER

Copper River, 8/2/2021 Update – Dave Sarafin, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve (WRST), (907) 822-7281, dave_sarafin@nps.gov

Management actions of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG) limited early season commercial fishing opportunities in the Copper River District in response to low numbers of returning salmon. The total commercial harvest for the Copper River District through July 30 is reported as 371,719 Sockeye Salmon and 6,941 Chinook Salmon.

The ADFG sonar at Miles Lake (located just downstream of the Million Dollar Bridge in the Copper River) recorded salmon passage from May 12 through July 28; providing a season total estimate of 751,262 salmon migrating upstream. This estimate is 31% above the cumulative management objective of 571,779 salmon for this date of the season and exceeds the season objective of 575,297 salmon passing the sonar and exceeds the 2021 inriver goal of 605,057 by 146,205 salmon. A daily estimate of 7,122 salmon migrated past the sonar on July 28.

The Native Village of Eyak (NVE) Baird Canyon fish wheels captured and tagged 1,962 Chinook Salmon through July 17. This total capture number is low, relative to historical levels. Tagging efforts for the season were discontinued on July 17. The upriver fish wheels at Canyon Creek have captured and examined 1,377 Chinook salmon through

July 21 (date of latest report received), of which, 117 were recaptured fish that had been tagged at the downstream wheels.

Inriver sonar salmon passage estimates provide the primary assessment of the Sockeye Salmon return to the Copper River. Although fishing opportunities and harvest in the commercial fishery were limited in the early part of the season, the assessment of inriver Sockeye Salmon run strength has now exceeded ADFG management objectives for the season, as estimated by the sonar. These objectives are designed to provide harvest opportunities to both Federal subsistence and other State upriver users, as well as to achieve the sustainable escapement goal for Sockeye Salmon.

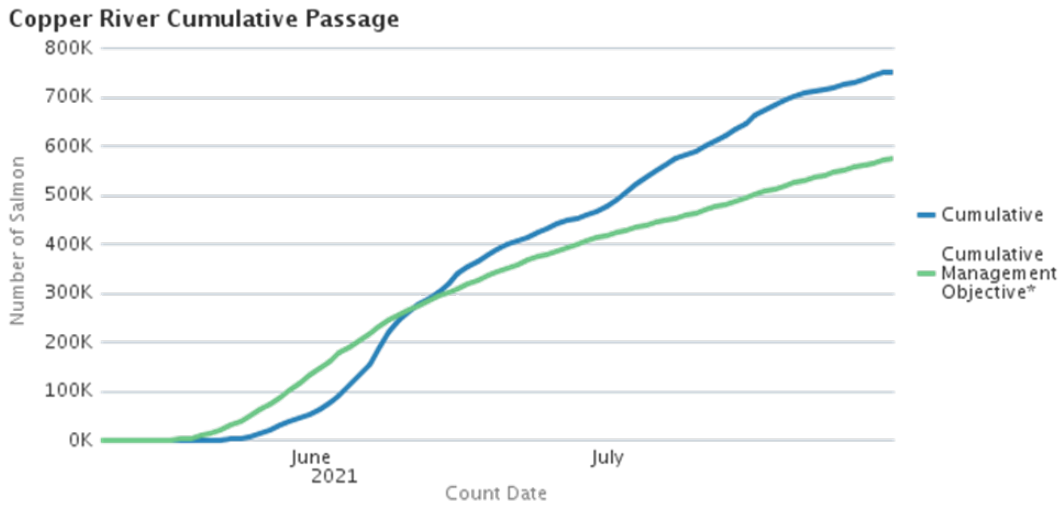
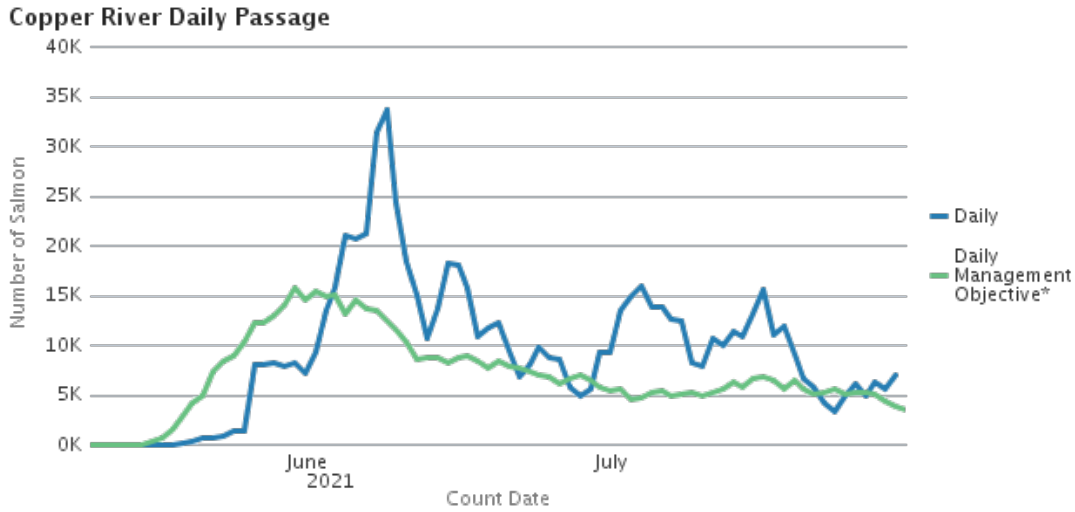
As with Sockeye Salmon, fisheries managers also monitor assessments of the Chinook Salmon run strength; the primary mid-season indicator are data from the Chinook Salmon inriver abundance project operated by NVE. Additional insight is gained from the recent application of updated technology at the Miles Lake sonar site to provide species apportionment data. Assessments indicate a weak return and managers believe that the Chinook Salmon sustainable escapement goal (SEG) will likely not be met.

In response to this assessment of a weak Chinook Salmon return, the ADFG closed all State fisheries of the Upper Copper River drainage to the retention of Chinook Salmon; including the personal use fishery of the Chitina Subdistrict, the sport fisheries, and the subsistence fishery of the Glennallen Subdistrict. Concurrent with these closures, including that of the upper river subsistence fishery, the ADFG has continued to authorize periodic openings of the commercial and subsistence fisheries of the Copper River District to continue since the Chinook Salmon entry to the Copper River is historically nearly complete by early July.

The Chinook Salmon closures do not affect those fishing under Federal subsistence regulations. Harvest by Federal users through the remainder of the season is not expected to be high enough to have a significant impact on the sustainability of the stocks. At this time, no Federal Special Action has been issued by the inseason manager to restrict the harvest of Chinook Salmon, or for any other purpose, in the fisheries of the Upper Copper River. Federal managers will continue to monitor run strength indices to evaluate the need for appropriate fisheries management actions in the Federal waters of the Copper River Drainage.

Although Federal actions have not been taken, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve (WRST) prepared and distributed an advisory announcement intended to inform all subsistence users of the present concerns for Copper River Chinook Salmon. This announcement was sent to all Upper Copper River District Federal subsistence fishing permit holders with email addresses on record. In the announcement, WRST requested that users consider voluntarily releasing healthy Chinook Salmon that may be beyond their subsistence needs.

2021 Upper Copper River Salmon Passage at Miles Lake Sonar through July 28



*Management objectives are based on historical run-timing to achieve the in-river goal.

Source:

http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareacopperriver.salmon_escapement

The State subsistence fishery in the Glennallen Subdistrict opened on June 1, and closed to Chinook Salmon, effective June 28 through July 31. The State Chinook Salmon sport fisheries closed beginning June 26. With no retention of Chinook Salmon, the State personal use fishery in the Chitina Subdistrict is scheduled to be open for total of 96 hours during the week of August 2 through August 8.

The Federal subsistence fisheries in the Chitina Subdistrict, the Glennallen Subdistrict, and the Batzulnetas area opened on May 15 and are expected to remain open through September 30. Through the Office of Subsistence Management (OSM) Federal subsistence permit database website, one hundred and ninety-two (192) Chitina

Subdistrict permits, three hundred and fifty-seven (357) Glennallen Subdistrict permits, and one (1) Batzulnetas area permit have been issued to date.

The ADFG counting tower in the Gulkana River has reported a cumulative passage estimate through August 1 of 2,964 Chinook Salmon. This is a relatively very low estimate for this date in the season but is above the 2020 season count of 2,222 through this date.

Links:

ADFG Miles Lake daily sonar estimates

http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareacopperriver.salmon_escapement

NVE's Chinook Escapement Monitoring project in the Copper River

<http://eyak.fishscan.com/Summary/DailySummary.aspx>

ADFG Copper River Inseason Commercial Harvest Estimates

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareacopperriver.harvestsummary>

ADFG Sport Fish Emergency Orders and News Releases

<https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/EONR/index.cfm?ADFG=main.home>

ADFG Gulkana River counting tower

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/FishCounts/index.cfm?ADFG=main.displayResults&COUNTLOCATIONID=6&SpeciesID=410>

**PWS and Copper River Delta – Milo Burcham, Chugach National Forest, Cordova.
26 July 2021.**

(907) 424-4759 mburcham@fs.fed.us

2 August 2021

A total of 37 Federal Subsistence fishing permits have been issued for freshwaters within the Chugach National Forest portion of the Prince William Sound area of to date. Harvest statistics of this year's permit holders will not be known until reports are returned this winter. Most harvest under these permits takes place during the coho fishery in fresh waters of the Copper River Delta in August and September. Ninety permits were issued in 2020

COOK INLET AREA – Kenneth Gates, Senior Fish Biologist, Kenai Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office (907) 260-0132 Kenneth_Gates@FWS.GOV

A total of 458 permits have been issued to date to residents of Cooper Landing, Hope, and Ninilchik. Permit types include a general fishing permit and household permit. All permits were issued through the U.S. Postal Service. To date, 5,206 salmon have been reported as harvested from the Kenai and Kasilof rivers.

To date, 1,307 Sockeye Salmon have been reported as being harvested from the Kasilof River in the Community Gillnet Fishery of which 1,301 have been reported as being received on a federal subsistence permit. The set gillnet fishery in the Kenai River has harvested 3,089 Sockeye Salmon of which 1,913 have been reported on a federal subsistence permit. A total of 750 Sockeye Salmon have been reported as being harvested to date in the dip net fishery at the Russian River falls. Sixty Sockeye Salmon have been harvested on the Kasilof River in the Federal dip net fishery.

The 2021 subsistence dip net and set gillnet fisheries for Sockeye Salmon on the Kenai and Kasilof rivers is nearing the end of the regulatory date, August 15. Each fishery began on June 15 and June 16, respectively. The set gillnet in the Kenai River can resume operation again from September 10 to 30.

Seasons for subsistence fishing with rod and reel are the same as for the taking of fish under Alaska sport fishing regulations. Most of the initial rod and reel subsistence effort will be focused at Sockeye Salmon in the Upper Kenai and Russian Rivers which opened on June 11.

No Federal special actions have been issued to date despite a poor return of late-run Chinook Salmon in the Kenai River. Current escapement of large late-run Chinook Salmon is 6,189 through July 31, 2021. The minimum OEG of 15,000 fish is forecasted to not be met. The in-river sport fishery and Cook Inlet east side set gillnet commercial Sockeye Salmon fishery have been closed since July 21, 2021. In addition, retention of Chinook Salmon was prohibited in the State of Alaska personal-use fishery at the mouth of the Kenai River. In order to further conserve late-run Chinook Salmon in the Kenai River, restrictions have been placed on the Kenai River Coho Salmon sport fishery prohibiting bait and multiple hooks from August 1 to 15, 2021.

Fish counts at some Alaska Department of Fish and Game-operated assessment projects are available on-line at <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/FishCounts/index.cfm?ADFG=main.home>



Picture courtesy of Ninilchik Traditional Council fishing their community Subsistence Gillnet on the Kenai River during 2021.



Picture courtesy of Ninilchik Traditional Council fishing their community Subsistence Gillnet on the Kenai River during 2021.

Kodiak Island Area – Michael Brady, Refuge Manager, - Kodiak NWR
(907) 487-2600/0230 michael_brady@fws.gov or
Kevin Van Hatten (907) 487-0230 Kevin_VanHatten@fws.gov

Subsistence fishing around the northern Kodiak Archipelago has decreased over the past few weeks. The Buskin River has a few sockeye salmon returning but the overall escapement counts is low and is unlikely to meet its' lower escapement goal. Reports from local fishermen have shown a small pulse of fish were harvested in the harbor around Ouzinkie. Litnik continues to have a few sockeye moving past the weir.

The Chinook Salmon escapement continues to trickle into the Karluk and Ayakulik River drainages, but it is unlikely they will meet their respective lower escapement goals. Fishing of any type for Chinook salmon continues to be restricted on both systems.

Many subsistence users are turning their attention to deer hunting season which starts on August 1, 2021. There have been numerous commercial fishing openings around the Kodiak Island, which is contributing to the low number of subsistence users fishing for Sockeye Salmon. For those subsistence users who were not able to meet their needs, they will attempt to meet it by fishing for Coho Salmon.

Pink Salmon are slowly returning to the Buskin River and Coho Salmon are being caught by sport fishermen around Kodiak.

The Akalura project has been successfully in operation since June and no sockeye salmon have been counted moving into the system. All still photos have been viewed to date.

Any reports of subsistence activities will be reported during the upcoming week.

Federal Subsistence Fisheries Regulations for Kodiak Area
<http://alaska.fws.gov/asm/pdf/fishregs13/kodiak.pdf>

FISHERIES UPDATE FOR THE WEEK OF July 26, 2021.

***BRISTOL BAY, CHIGNIK, ALASKA PENINSULA, and ALEUTIAN ISLANDS –
Jonathon Gerken Fisheries Branch Chief Anchorage Fish and Wildlife Field Office***

These areas support abundant returns of salmon, particularly Sockeye Salmon; as well as some of the largest commercial fisheries for salmon in Alaska. All of the assessments of salmon returns are conducted by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, and provide the basis for any inseason assessment and management.

Bristol Bay:

Subsistence fishing is open in all districts but will close around commercial fishing openings.

The Sockeye Salmon sustainable escapement goals (SEG) for Bristol Bay systems are: (The current count as of August 1 are noted).

Escapement Goals:

Alagnak	SEG = 320,000 minimum / escapement ending 7/28/2021 = 3,226,904
Egegik	SEG = 800,000 – 2,000,000 / escapement ending 7/24/2021 = 1,832,196
Igushik	SEG = 150,000 – 400,000 / escapement ending 7/29/2021 = 878,952
Kvichak	SEG = 2,000,000 – 10,000,000 / escapement ending 7/27/2021 = 4,703,520
Naknek	SEG = 800,000 – 2,000,000 / escapement ending 7/22/2021 = 2,796,534
Nushagak	SEG = 370,000 – 900,000 / escapement ending 7/23/2021 = 4,688,358
Nushagak	SEG = 55,000 – 270,000 Chinook Salmon / escapement ending 7/23/2021 = 54,309
Togiak	SEG = 150,000 – 270,000 / Installed July 5 – current escapement = 232,026
Ugashik	SEG = 500,000 – 1,400,000 / escapement ending 7/24/2021 = 2,859,930
Wood River	SEG = 700,000 – 1,800,000 / escapement ending 7/24/2021 = 4,410,156

The cumulative commercial Sockeye Salmon catch is 40,202,297 fish.

Chignik:

The cumulative weir count as of August 1 is 264,615 early-run and 213,561 late-run Sockeye Salmon resulting in a total of 478,176 fish. The interim escapement objective for July 30 is 490,000 – 700,000 fish, and the interim escapement goal for late-run Sockeye salmon for July 30 is 140,000-250,000. As of August 1 the Chignik River Sockeye Salmon run is composed of 100% late-run Sockeye Salmon and is tracking within the established escapement objectives for this time frame.

The cumulative weir count as of August 1 for Chinook Salmon is 1,076 fish. The typical mid-point of the Chinook Salmon run is July 20. It is unlikely, based on the current rate of escapement, that the lower range (1,300) of the escapement goal for Chignik River Chinook salmon will be achieved. In an effort to conserve the lower than expected Chinook salmon run, both state and Federal fisheries were closed concurrently to maintain viability of the Chignik River Chinook salmon population on July 14, as stated in Emergency Special Action, **8-KS-01-21**.

Escapement Goals:

Early-Run Sockeye Salmon/ Black Lake	BEG = 350,000 – 450,000
Late-Run Sockeye Salmon/ Chignik Lake	SEG = 200,000 – 400,000
-In-river Goal	-10,000 in August and 10,000 in September in addition to minimum escapement objectives
Chinook Salmon	BEG = 1,300 – 2,700

Pink Salmon – Even year	SEG = 170,000 – 280,000
Chum Salmon	SEG = 45,000 – 110,000

Alaska Peninsula:

Subsistence fishing is open in all districts but will close around commercial fishing openings.

North Peninsula Management Area Escapement Goals and Counts for July 31:

Nelson River	BEG = 97,000 – 219,000, current escapement = 102,230
Bear River	BEG = 117,000 – 195,000, current escapement = 387,240

South Peninsula Management Area Escapement Counts for July 31:

Ilnik River current escapement = 69,211 (weir pulled 7/17)
 Orzinski River current escapement = 19,758
 Sandy River current escapement = 52,857 (weir pulled 7/24)
 McLees River current escapement = 16,173 (weir pulled 7/28)

The cumulative commercial catch as of July 31 is 11,680,784 fish with 6,152,827 Sockeye Salmon and 4,415,292 Pink Salmon being the largest components of harvest.

Aleutian Islands.

All fisheries are forecast to meet escapement goals and provide harvest opportunity.

Southcentral Alaska Web Links***Federal Subsistence Management Fisheries News Releases***

<http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/news/fishing/index.cfm>

ADF&G Sport and Personal Use Fishing News Release and Emergency Order link

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=fishingSportFishingInfo.R2>

ADF&G Commercial Fisheries News Release and Emergency Order Link

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.main>

Weekly ADF&G Sport Fishing Reports for Southcentral Alaska

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/FishingReports/index.cfm?ADFG=R2.Home>

Statewide ADF&G Fish counts:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/FishCounts/>

Yukon River – Keith Herron Ivy, Biologist USFWS Fairbanks Office. July 25 – 31, 2021

Federal Manager, Holly Carroll (907) 351-3029, holly_carroll@fws.gov, Keith Herron Ivy, (907) 312-3397, keith_ivy@fws.gov, Gerald Maschmann, (907) 456-0406, Gerald_Maschmann@fws.gov

Assessment Information

The Chinook and Summer Chum Salmon runs are essentially over in the lower Yukon River and management has transitioned to the Fall Chum and Coho Salmon season in the Coastal District, Districts 1, 2, 3, 4 and Koyukuk River. The last day of counts for the East Fork Andreafsky Weir was July 28th, and escapement goals were not met for both Chinook and Summer Chum Salmon. The Anvik River sonar Summer Chum escapement estimate is at a record low and the escapement goal is unlikely to be met. The Henshaw Creek Weir Chinook and Summer Chum escapement estimates are both at record lows. Chinook Salmon escapement estimates at the Chena and Salcha Rivers are below average. The typical mid-point for late timing Chinook runs at the Eagle Sonar is July 27, so the run is likely half over at the project. The Chinook Salmon passage through July 29 is 16,900 Chinook Salmon, the lowest on record. It's very unlikely the interim management escapement goal of 42,500- 55,000 will be met.

The Fall Chum Salmon preseason projection, based on the relationship between Summer Chum Salmon and Fall Chum Salmon run sizes, is for a run size less than 300,000 fish, which is critically low. According to the Fall Chum Salmon Management Plan, the preseason projection does not meet the threshold of 300,000 fish needed to allow subsistence fishing. The current projected run size is unlikely to meet the drainagewide escapement goal of 300,000-600,000 Fall Chum Salmon, tributary escapement goals and Canadian treaty objectives. Therefore, subsistence fishing for Chum Salmon will remain closed to begin the fall season.

Fall season assessment started at the Lower Yukon Test Fishery (LYTF) on July 16 and the Pilot Station sonar transitioned on July 19. The Fall Chum Salmon abundance at LYTF, Mt. Village Test Fishery (MVTF), and the Pilot Station sonar are all well below average, and no large pulses have been seen yet.

The latest fish passage and escapement estimates can be found at ADF&G's website at www.adfg.alaska.gov/yukonfishcounts

Management Actions

The Yukon River Coastal District, District 1, District 2, District 3, Innoko River, District 4 and Koyukuk River have transitioned to fall season management.

Subsistence fishing is open to the use of dip nets and hook and line gear to target non-salmon and salmon species other than Chinook and Chum Salmon (such as Pink, Sockeye and Coho Salmon) for **Yukon River Coastal District, Districts 1, 2, 3, Innoko River and lower Subdistrict 4-A**. All Chinook and Chum Salmon caught using selective gear must be released alive immediately. Subsistence salmon fishing with other gear types remain closed.

Salmon fishing is closed in **Yukon River Subdistrict 4-A Upper, Subdistrict 4-B, 4-C, Koyokuk River, District 5, and District 6**. Pink and Sockeye Salmon are not present in these districts, and selective gear opportunities are expected when Coho Salmon are more abundant.

During subsistence salmon fishing closures, 4-inch or smaller mesh gillnets are restricted to a maximum length of 60 feet. This gear may be used to target non-salmon species.

Fishermen are reminded to use this gear in areas where non-salmon species are abundant to avoid incidentally harvesting Chinook and Chum Salmon.

For detailed information on management actions and assessment, subscribe to ADF&G advisory announcements at <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.search>

Inseason Outreach

The ninth YRDFA teleconference occurred on July 27. Participation on the call was much lower than previous weeks. There were continued questions and discussion about salmon bycatch in the Bering Sea fisheries, need to support communities in finding alternative food sources, emergency aid and solutions to address food security issues.

Call in to the YRDFA weekly teleconferences each Tuesday at 1:00 pm at the following number: 1-800-315-6338, Passcode: 98566#.

Get announcements and more by liking the ADF&G Yukon River Facebook page at: www.facebook.com/YukonRiverFishingADFG/

KUSKOKWIM RIVER

In Season Manager – Boyd Blihovde, Refuge Manager, Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge Contact Boyd_Blihovde@fws.gov; (907) 543-3151 or spencer_rearden@fws.gov

Nothing to report this week.

Yukon-Kuskokwim-Interior Alaska Web Links

Federal Subsistence Management Fisheries News Releases:

<http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/news/fishing/index.cfm>

Federal Subsistence Fisheries Regulations for Yukon–Northern Area

http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish_shell/upload/Yukon.pdf

NEW = Kuskokwim River Updates Hosted on OSM Website

<http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/kuskokwim.cfm>

Federal Subsistence Fisheries Regulations for Kuskokwim Area

http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish_shell/upload/Kusko.pdf

ADF&G Sport and Personal Use Fishing News Release and Emergency Order link:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/EONR/index.cfm?ADFG=region.R3>

ADF&G Commercial Fisheries News Release and Emergency Order Link:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.main>

Weekly ADF&G Sport Fishing Reports for Interior Alaska:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/FishingReports/index.cfm?ADFG=R3.home>

Statewide ADF&G Fish counts:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/FishCounts/>

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Norton Sound District

Salmon Assessment:

The pink salmon commercial harvest of 246,000 fish is a record catch for an odd-numbered year, and the highest harvest since 1998, although the pink salmon harvest is the highest in over 20 years, the Norton Sound pink run was average for an odd-numbered year. The difference is that for the first time in the 2000's there was major buyer capacity allowing for more commercial fishing time. Chum salmon runs were weak for the second year in a row despite the good parent year escapement in 2016 and 17. Silvers are appearing in the commercial catch and have been passing the escapement counting projects, and the department will shift to silver sit salmon management next week. Weights for chum, sockeye and silvers in the commercial catch have been much lower than average.

Subdistricts 6 (Unalakleet)

Federal Regulation:

By federal regulation, the Federal public waters of the Unalakleet River, upstream from the mouth of the Chirosky River, are closed to the taking of Chinook salmon from July 1–to July 31, by all users.

Subsistence Fishing:

Subsistence net fishing is open 7 days a week with all kings required to be released when beach seining.

Commercial Fishing:

The cumulative catch to July 27 is 1 king, 370 chums, 160,000 pinks, 40 sockeyes and 50 silvers caught by 35 permit holders.

Unalakleet River Floating Weir — A cooperative project of Fish and game United States BLM and NS EDC major funding provided by US Fish and Wildlife Service Office of Subsistence Management.

The cumulative counts through July 27 are 487 kings, 14,000 chums, 1,300 sockeyes and 1,100 silvers. King passage is 9th lowest in 10 years of counts, and the average historical 95percent point of passage is now. This is the lowest chum count in the 11 years of project history. Previous lows were 32,000 chums in 2016, and 19,000 in 2014. The average historical third-quarter point for chum passage is now.

North River Tower — Camp J. B. — A NSEDC project. The project has escapement goals of 1,200-2,600 kings, 25,000 pinks, 550-1,100 silvers (aerial survey) and no goal yet established for chums.

The cumulative counts through July 27 are 825 kings, 800 chums, 350,000 pinks, 6 sockeyes and 200 silvers. The average historical 95% point for king passage is now. The chum count is a historical low in the 26 year project history and the average historical third-quarter point is now. Last year was the second lowest chum count by this date with 800 chums. The pink count is fourth highest in 13 years of odd-numbered year counts, but well below the 2 million pinks counted by this time in 2019. The pink average historical third-quarter point is now.

Subdistrict 5 (Shaktoolik)

Subsistence Fishing:

Subsistence net fishing is open 7 days a week with all kings required to be released when beach seining.

Commercial Fishing:

The cumulative catch is 440 chums, 61,000 pinks, 75 sockeyes and 80 silvers caught by 20 permit holders.

Shaktoolik Sonar/Tower – An NSEDC project with no escapement goals yet established.

Cumulative counts through July 27 are 933 kings, 9,000 chums, 700,000 pinks, 100 sockeyes and 600 silvers. The king count ranks fifth out of eight years of counts. King passage is usually well past 95 percent now. Chums are about the same as last year and well below previous six years. Pinks should be near the 90 percent point of passage now. With four years of odd-numbered year counts to compare they are above the 400,000-pink count in 2015, but well below the 2019 count of 4 million pinks and the 2017 count of 1.6 million.

Subdistrict 4 (Norton Bay)

Subsistence Fishing:

Subsistence net fishing is open 7 days a week,

Commercial Fishing:

The cumulative catch is 23 chums 7,600 pinks, 2 sockeyes and 6 silvers by 3 permit holders.

Inglutalik River Tower – A NSEDC project. No escapement goals yet established.

The cumulative counts through July 27 are 250 kings, 3,100 chums, 200,000 pinks, 15 sockeyes and 9 silvers. King counts are like recent years. Chums are well below other years except for last year. The next lowest count in 2019 had 24,000 chums by now. The pink count is like 2019 and only two other years had higher counts in 10 years of counting with the 2017 count of 1.3 million pinks being the highest count by now.

Ungalik River Tower – A NSEDC project. No escapement goals yet established.

Cumulative counts through July 27 are 321 kings, 16,000 chums, 620,000 pinks 4,400 sockeyes and 3 silvers. Tthis is the third year of the project.

Subdistrict 3 (Elim)

Subsistence Fishing:

Net fishing is open 7 days a week,

Commercial Fishing:

The cumulative catch is 300 chums 6,000 pinks, 20 sockeyes and 717 silvers by 10 permit holders.

Kwiniuk River Tower-Camp Joel – A Fish & Game project with assistance from NSEDC has escapement goals of 250 kings, 9,100 – 32,600 chums, 8,400 pinks and 650-1,300 silvers (aerial survey goal).

The cumulative counts through July 27 are 210 kings, 3,600 chums, 52,000 pinks 72 sockeyes and 222 silvers. Kings and chums are usually passed the 95 percent of passage by now. Chums are at a record low in 57 years of Tower counts and trailing by 1000 chums last year's previous record low run with the total count of 5,000 chums. Yhis year and last year like the 2012 in 2013 chum runs that had the previous second low lower counts of 5,600 chums each year. Pinks are tracking like a normal odd-numbered year run and much lower than the recent record year runs. The average historical third-quarter point of pink passage is now.

Subdistrict 2 (Golovin)**Subsistence Fishing:**

Subsistence net fishing is open is open 7 days a week

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Commercial Fishing:

The cumulative catch is 3,200 chums 11,000 pinks, 110 sockeyes and 30 silvers for 8 permit holders.

Fish River Tower - A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance from Fish & Game. No escapement goals have been established.

High water has prevented tower operations to date.

Subdistrict 1 (Nome)**Subsistence Fishing:**

The subsistence fishing net fishing schedule is in effect in all freshwater subsistence areas and the marine waters west of Cape Nome is open from 6 PM Wednesday until 6 PM Monday. East of Cape Nome the marine waters are open 7 days a week

Stream-specific harvest limits are listed on the subsistence salmon fishing permits. There are no catch limits in marine waters.

Commercial Fishing:

No upcoming fishing periods.

Solomon River Weir – A Fish & Game project, has no escapement goals yet established.

Counts to July 19 were 3 kings, 73 chums, 2,600 pinks and 4 silvers. Chum counts are the lowest for this date and the average midpoint is July 21. Pink counts are much lower than the record runs in the average midpoint is late July.

Eldorado River Weir – A NSEDC project has an escapement goal range at the weir of 4,400 – 14, 200 chum salmon.

The project is pulled

The cumulative counts were 15 kings, 5,625 chums, 5,270 pinks, 48 sockeyes and 10 silvers. The chum passage was fourth lowest in the 2000's. The pink count was the fourth highest in 14 years of odd-numbered year counts, but only one-tenth of the pinks that were in 2019.

Nome River Weir – A Fish & Game project with escapement goals of 1,600 – 5,300 chum salmon and 13,000 pink salmon.

Cumulative counts to July 27 are 1 king, 170 chums, 3,500 pinks and 6 sockeyes. The chum count is one of the lowest, and the third-quarter point of chum passage is usually the end of July. Pinks are tracking like a normal odd-numbered year and much lower than the recent years record runs. The average third-quarter point for pinks is usually the end of the month.

Snake River Weir – A NSEDC project has an escapement goal of 2,000 – 4,200 chum salmon.

Cumulative counts through July 27 are 1 king, 560 chums, 4,000 pinks and 60 sockeyes. The chum counts are now ahead of last year's count, but well below the 2,000-chum average now. The average third-quarter point of passage is usually now Pinks are tracking much lower than the recent year's record runs, but ranks 6th highest for the 14 odd-numbered year counts. The average third quarter point is usually in early August.

Port Clarence District

Subsistence Fishing:

Subsistence fishing is open 7 days a week except net fishing is closed on the Pilgrim River.

Commercial salmon fishing remains closed in the Port Clarence Subdistrict due to lack of buyer interest.

Pilgrim River Weir – A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance from Fish and Game. It has an escapement goal of 4,000-8,000 sockeyes based on aerial survey at Salmon Lake & the Grand Central tributary to Salmon Lake.

Pilgrim River floating Weir The cumulative counts to July 27 are 10 kings, 1,300 chums, 600 pinks and 3,400 sockeyes and 4 silvers. The sockeye average third-quarter point is usually near the end of July. If Weir counts improve, subsistence net fishing will reopen with the season catch limit remaining at 25 sockeyes. The last time net fishing was closed on the Pilgrim River was 2014, and after a two-week closure it was reopened. This year the closure was a week later than in 2014 and the first day of closure last Friday, there were 212 sockeyes counted through the weir and the next 3 days the sockeye passage through the weir dropped to less than 100 daily, so unless there is an increase in sockeye numbers the Pilgrim River would not reopen to net fishing. If the lower end of the

escapement goal is not reached this year, hindsight would be that the department waited too long before pulling the nets.

Kotzebue District.

Subsistence Fishing:

Subsistence net fishing is open seven days a week.

Commercial Fishing:

The cumulative catch is 15,000 chums by 30 permit holders. The run has dropped well below average and the department has continued to limit commercial fishing time.

Kobuk River Test Fish - Fish & Game project.

The test Fish cumulative catches are 30 chums and 130 sheefish. The chum catch is like last year's catch but has been falling off.

Federal Subsistence Fisheries Regulations for the Kotzebue Area
<http://alaska.fws.gov/asm/pdf/fishregs11/norton.pdf>