

FISHERIES UPDATE FOR THE WEEK OF AUGUST 17-23, 2021.

Report #13

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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 August 22, 406 sockeye have been counted in the trap and about 300 have been harvested. The current estimated escapement to-date is about 750. 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.

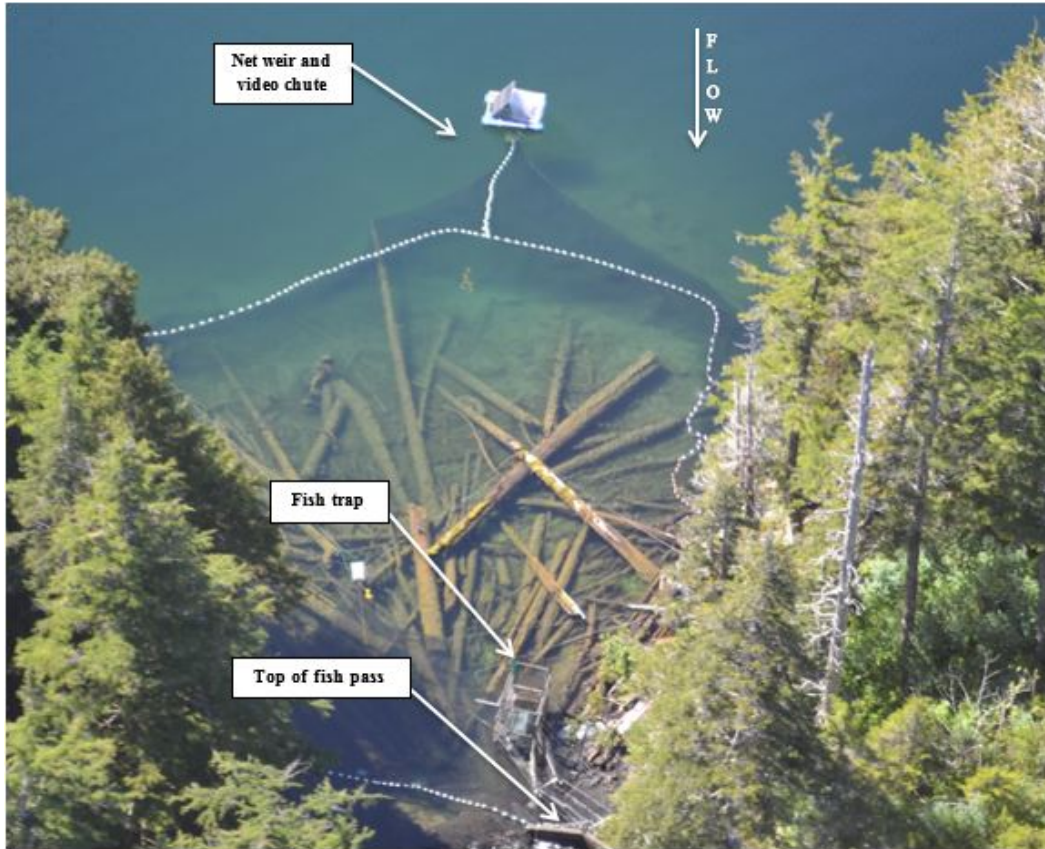


Figure 1. Aerial photo of the Falls Lake outlet illustrating the typical location of weir equipment.

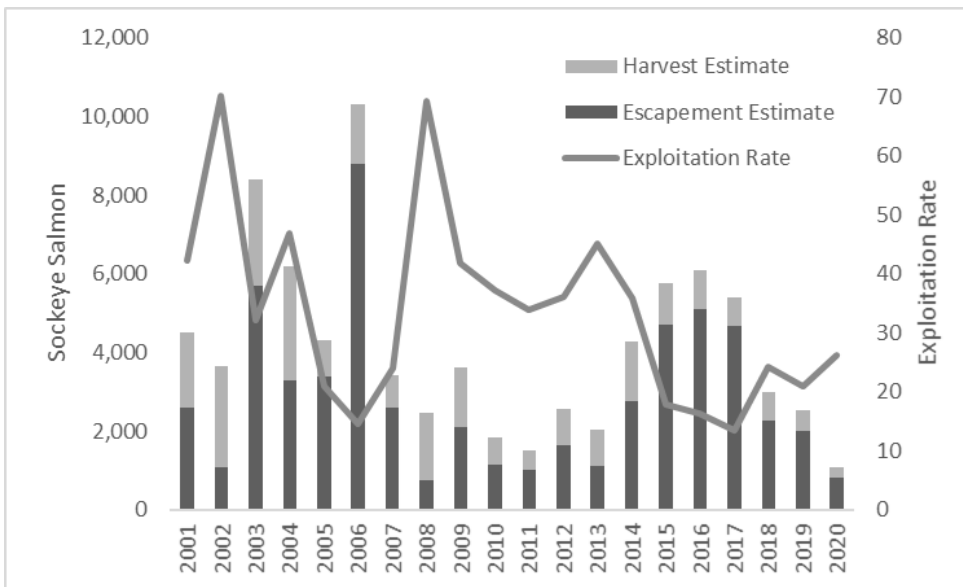


Figure 2. Escapement plus harvest equals total terminal run of Sockeye Salmon at Falls Lake, 2001-2020.

Klag Bay - The Sitka Tribe of Alaska operates the Sockeye Salmon monitoring weir at Klag Bay which was installed June 30. As of August 22, 6,580 sockeye have been

counted at the weir and 1,636 have been harvested. Sockeye escapement is flow dependent at Klag Bay and recent rain helped bring fish in. ADF&G [closed the Klag Bay subsistence and sport sockeye fisheries](#) on August 5 due to low escapement and few fish in the bay. 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.

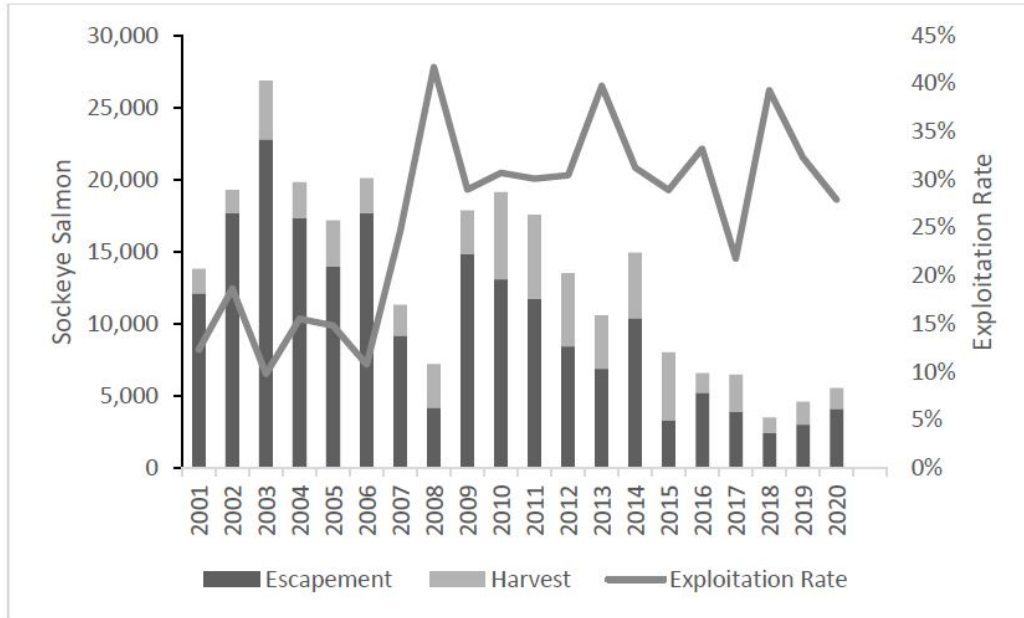


Figure 3. Creel survey harvest and escapement for Klag Lake Sockeye Salmon, 2001-2020.

Redoubt Lake - The Forest Service operates the Redoubt Lake weir which was operational as of June 15. As of August 22, 54,165 sockeye have entered the lake. 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](#)

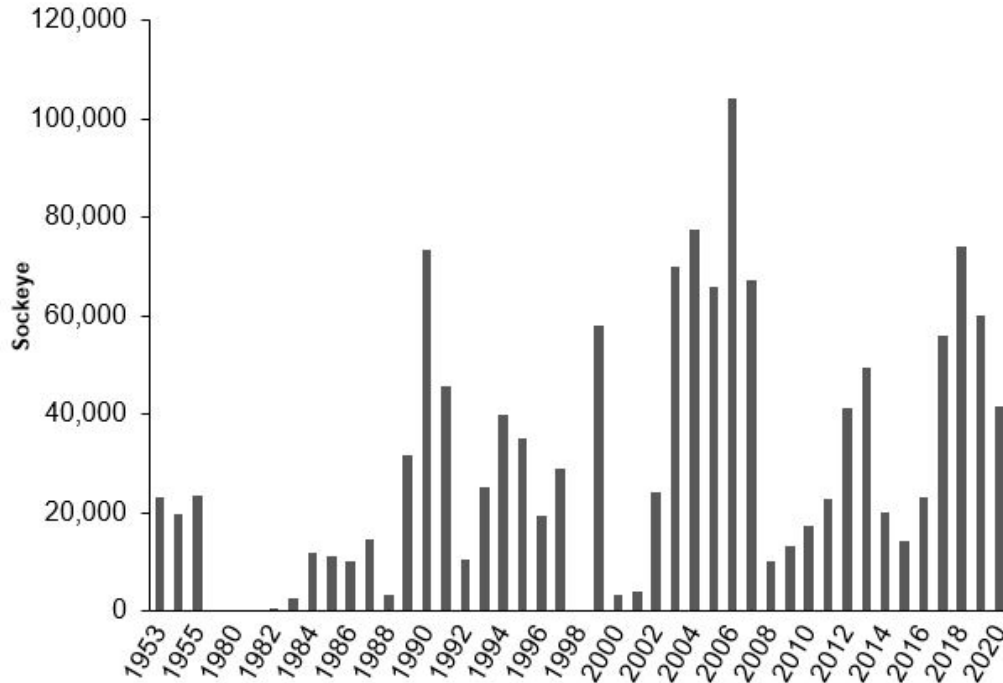


Figure 4. Annual Sockeye Salmon expanded escapement into Redoubt Lake for years with data: 1953 to 1955, 1982 to 1997, and 1999 to 2019. The weir was not operated in 1998.

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.

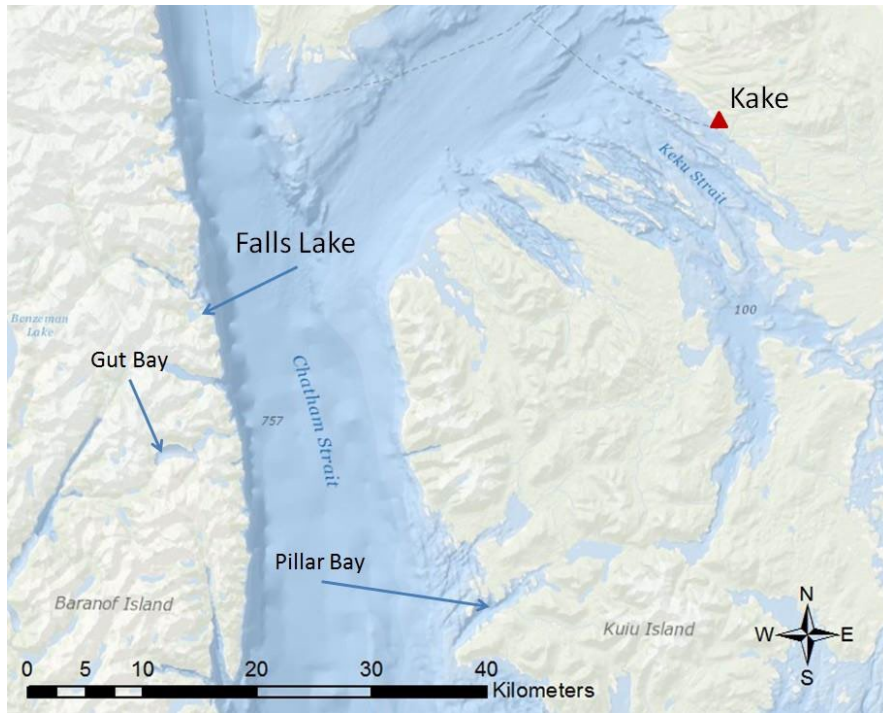


Figure 5. Location of Gut Bay in relation to Falls Lake and the village of Kake

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

Reporting complete for 2021 season.

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

August 23, 2021

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 August 16, the Sockeye weir count is about 2,700 fish. That puts us on pace for a total escapement of about 3,200 fish, based on historical run timing. Counting has been complicated by a strong return of Pink Salmon, with about 1,000 fish per day passing into the lake. Live video and clips from the weir can be seen at <http://nevalake.ddns.net:81> .



Figure 1. Live video capture of the Neva Lake weir site, August 23, 2021.



Figure 2. Video capture of a Sockeye Salmon passing through the Neva Lake video weir, August 23, 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). Normally, video from the site is transmitted to the ACA office in Angoon, where it is reviewed by ACA personnel. This year, due to a damaged mountaintop repeater, video is being recorded at the weir site and periodically retrieved by USFS crews for review. Counts from the weir will be available as video is reviewed. Based on preliminary counts, the Sitkoh Lake Sockeye return appears to be weak this year, but video from the peak of the run is still being processed and reviewed, so it's too early to tell.



Figure 3. The Sitkoh Lake weir, located at the outlet of Sitkoh Lake.

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=RI.home>

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

SOUTHCENTRAL ALASKA

PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND – COPPER RIVER

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

Reporting complete for season. Please contact above author for clarification.

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

17 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

Reporting complete for 2021 season.

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

Reporting complete for 2021 season.

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

FISHERIES UPDATE FOR THE WEEK OF AUGUST 16, 2021.

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

Reporting complete for 2021 season.

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 – Gerald Maschmann, Biologist USFWS Fairbanks Office. August 15 – 21, 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 Alaskan portion Yukon River drainage and management has transitioned to the fall Chum and Coho salmon season. Chinook Salmon escapements were all well below average and no escapement goals were met. The Chinook Salmon run at the Eagle Sonar is 99% complete based on late run timing and passage through August 19 is 30,425 Chinook Salmon, the lowest since 2000. The interim management escapement goal of 42,500-55,000 will not be met. The Eagle Sonar will be transitioning to estimating fall Chum Salmon passage any day now.

The fall Chum Salmon run is approaching the median $\frac{3}{4}$ point of the run. The fall Chum Salmon abundance at LYTF and Mt. Village Test Fishery (MVTF), are well below average. As of August 19, the Yukon River mainstem sonar near Pilot Station estimated 90,933 Chum Salmon (summer and fall) have passed upriver. This is well below the median passage of 323,415 fish. Fall Chum Salmon typically enter the Yukon in distinct pulses with short periods of high passage and longer periods of low passage. This season, we did not see any typically large pulses of chum salmon. Genetic mixed stock analysis of the fall run through August 5 indicates that about $\frac{2}{3}$ were summer Chum Salmon while only about $\frac{1}{3}$ were fall Chum Salmon. The current projection of total runs size indicates a fall Chum Salmon run size of approximately 100,000 fish. According to the Fall Chum Salmon Management Plan, the projection does not meet the threshold of 300,000 fish needed to allow subsistence fishing. In addition, the current run size is unlikely to meet the drainage wide escapement goal of 300,000-600,000 fall Chum Salmon, tributary escapement goals and Canadian treaty objectives.

The Coho Salmon run typically enters the Yukon during the second half of the fall Chum Salmon run. Unfortunately, the Coho Salmon run is also coming in very low. The abundance of Coho Salmon at LYTF and Mt. Village Test Fishery (MVTF), is well below average. The estimated passage of Coho Salmon past the Pilot Station Sonar through August 19 is 8,466 fish, the lowest passage on record. This is well below the median passage for this time of 59,865 fish. The usual mid-point of the Coho Salmon run in the lower Yukon is approximately August 22.

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

Management Actions

The Alaskan portion of the Yukon drainage has 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.

Subsistence salmon fishing is closed in **Yukon River Subdistrict 4-A Upper, Subdistrict 4-B, 4-C, Koyokuk River, District 5, District 6 and Upper Tanana Area**. Pink and Sockeye Salmon are not present in these districts, and selective gear opportunities are expected when or if 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 twelfth YR DFA teleconference occurred on August 17. Public participation is waning as fishermen participate in other subsistence activities such as hunting and preparing for winter. Participants expressed gratitude for receiving additional donated fish from Bristol Bay.

Call in to the YR DFA 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

Reporting complete for 2021 season.

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/>

Northwest Alaska – Ken Adkisson, National Park Service, Nome.
(907) 443-6104 ken_adkisson@nps.gov

Norton Sound District

Salmon Assessment:

All salmon escapement counting projects in Norton Sound are inoperable at this time because of high water and more rain is forecast so it is likely projects will not be operational in the near future. Murky water conditions in the rivers also hampers aerial surveys.

Because of lack of escapement information, the department will manage based on harvest-based management for the commercial silver fishery. Harvest-based management is when the department compares catches with previous years for the same time frame. The recent silver fishing period that ended Monday evening had catches similar to last year, and if the next opening shows below average catches, then there may be more time between openings and/or some subdistricts may not open.

Subdistricts 6 (Unalakleet)

Subsistence Fishing:

Subsistence gillnet fishing is open 7 days a week, but beach seining is closed.

Commercial Fishing:

Commercial salmon fishing opened for 24 hours in the Subdistrict from 6 p.m. Tuesday, August 17, until 6 p.m. Wednesday, August 18. Permit holders were limited to 100 fathoms of gillnet in aggregate length and gillnets must have a mesh size of 6 inches or smaller.

Subdistrict 5 (Shaktoolik)

Subsistence Fishing:

Gillnet fishing is open 7 days a week, but beach seining is closed.

Commercial Fishing:

Commercial salmon fishing opened for 24 hours in the Subdistrict from 6 p.m. Tuesday, August 17, until 6 p.m. Wednesday, August 18. Permit holders were limited to 100 fathoms of gillnet in aggregate length and gillnets must have a mesh size of 6 inches or smaller.

Subdistrict 4 (Norton Bay)

Subsistence Fishing:

Net fishing is open 7 days a week.

Commercial Fishing:

Commercial salmon fishing opened for 24 hours in the Subdistrict from 6 p.m. Tuesday, August 17, until 6 p.m. Wednesday, August 18. Permit holders were limited to 100 fathoms of gillnet in aggregate length and gillnets must have a mesh size of 6 inches or smaller.

Subdistrict 3 (Elim)

Subsistence Fishing:

Subsistence net fishing is open is open 7 days a week

Commercial Fishing:

. Commercial salmon fishing opened for 24 hours in the Subdistrict from 6 p.m. Tuesday, August 17, until 6 p.m. Wednesday, August 18. Permit holders were limited to 100 fathoms of gillnet in aggregate length and gillnets must have a mesh size of 6 inches or smaller.

Subdistrict 2 (Golovin)

Subsistence Fishing:

Subsistence net fishing is open is open 7 days a week

Commercial Fishing:

Commercial salmon fishing opened for 24 hours in the Subdistrict from 6 p.m. Tuesday, August 17, until 6 p.m. Wednesday, August 18. Permit holders were limited to 100 fathoms of gillnet in aggregate length and gillnets must have a mesh size of 6 inches or smaller.

Subdistrict 1 (Nome)

Subsistence Fishing:

Effective August 16 beach sayings are no longer a legal gear to harvest salmon.

The subsistence silver salmon net fishing regulations are in effect unless changed by Emergency Order. The marine waters are open continuously with gillnets up to 300 feet allowed. The fresh waters are open from 6 p.m. Wednesday until 6 p.m. Monday. After September 1, the fresh water subsistence areas will be open continuously. Gill nets up to 50 feet in length will be allowed, but no more than one-half of any channel may be blocked at any time. No drift gillnetting is allowed.

Commercial Fishing:

. The Nome Subdistrict opened from 9 p.m. Tuesday, August 17, until 9 p.m. Wednesday, August 18. Permit holders are limited to 100 fathoms of gillnet in aggregate length and gillnets must have a mesh size of 6 inches or smaller.

Port Clarence District

Subsistence Fishing:

Subsistence fishing is open 7 days a week except all net fishing is closed on the Pilgrim River. An aerial survey count of Salmon Lake last week was less than 2,000 sockeyes and the Pilgrim River will remain closed to net fishing until further notice.

Kotzebue District.

Subsistence Fishing:

Subsistence net fishing is open seven days a week.

Commercial Fishing:

Commercial salmon fishing opened for 8 hours daily from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, August 16–18, in the Kotzebue Sound District.

This year's chum salmon catch rates continue to be low and is similar to the 2020 run. Additional time may be allowed if catch data indicates that chum salmon abundance is

improving to levels that would allow for additional fishing time. Extra time is not anticipated due to poor chum runs experienced in most areas in Western Alaska in 2021. The department will continue to monitor the fishery and assess the potential for additional fishing time.

Kobuk River Test Fish - Fish & Game project.

The test Fish cumulative catches are 39 chums and 140 sheefish, The test Fish crew has not caught any fish since July 28 and the department believes the extremely high water on the Kobuk River is allowing the fish to swim under the net. The past week is usually the midpoint of catches at the test net.

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