

**FISHERIES UPDATE FOR THE WEEK OF JUNE 5-11, 2023.** Report #3  
Compiled by George Pappas - (907) 317-2165, [George\\_Pappas@fws.gov](mailto: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.

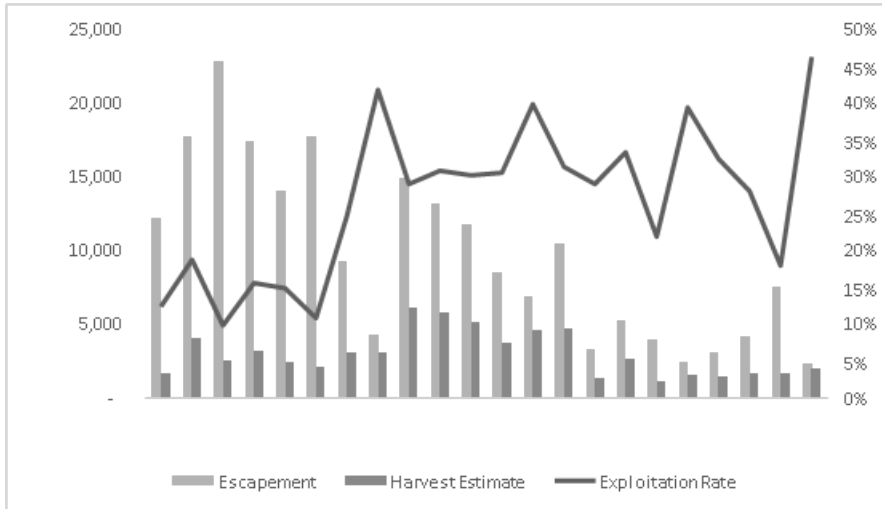
## **SOUTHEAST ALASKA**

**Sheet'ká and Xunaa (Sitka and Hoonah) Area – Ashley Bolwerk, Forest Service, Tongass National Forest, office: (907)747-4299; work cell: (907)738-3461; [ashley.bolwerk@usda.gov](mailto:ashley.bolwerk@usda.gov)**

**Herring** – A commercial herring fishery occurred in Sheet'ká X'áat'i (Sitka Sound) in 2023. Please see this [summary of Sitka Sound herring 2023](#). More information can be found on the Alaska Department of Fish and Game's "[Commercial Herring Fishery](#)" [homepage](#). Here is the [2023 summary of southeast Alaska herring](#).

**Falls Lake** – The Falls Lake weir project was not funded in the latest FRMP cycle.

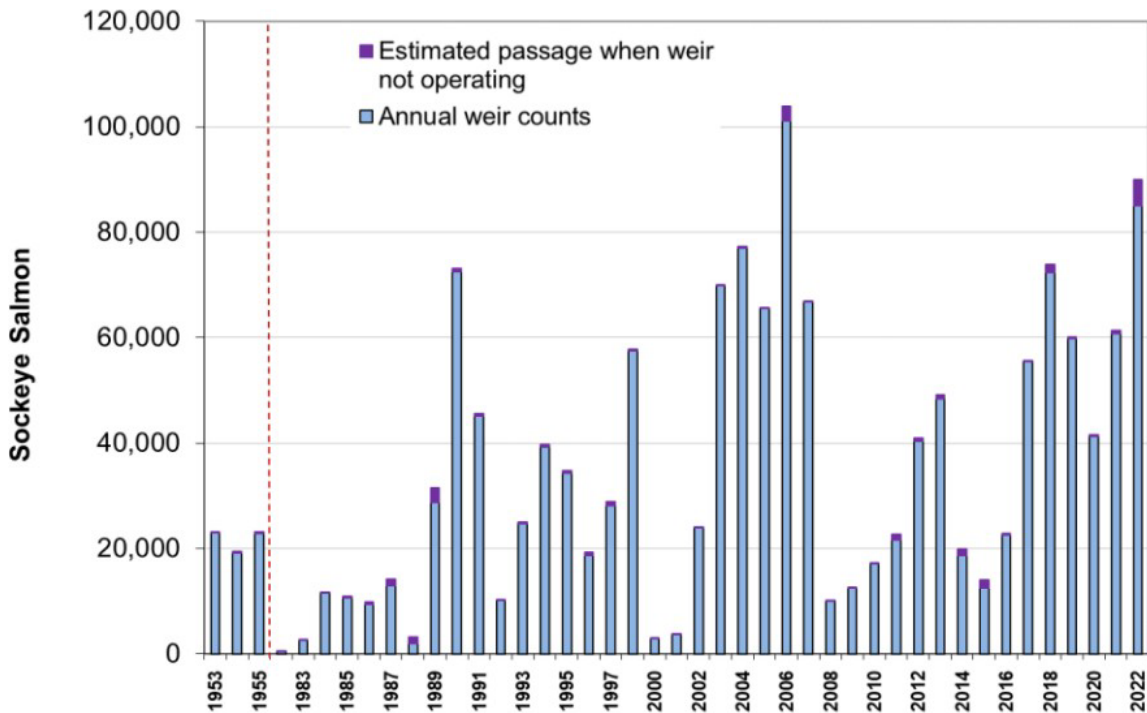
**Chaas' Geeyí (Klag Bay)** - The Sitka Tribe of Alaska operates the sockeye salmon monitoring weir at Klag Bay which is scheduled to be operational the last week in June. In 2022, approximately 2,029 sockeye migrated past the weir while an estimated 1,960 were harvested in the marine terminal area subsistence and sport fishery. Subsistence The Sitka Tribe of Alaska crew will be setting up the weir on June 23<sup>rd</sup> and hopes to be fish tight by June 26.



**Figure 3. Creel survey harvest and escapement for Klag Lake Sockeye Salmon, 2001-2022.**

**Redoubt Lake** - The crew is assembling the weir this week.

The Forest Service operates the Redoubt Lake weir which will be operational June 10. In 2022, an estimated 90,005 Sockeye Salmon passed through the weir into Redoubt Lake. On July 9, in accordance with the Redoubt Lake Management Plan, the individual/household subsistence Sockeye Salmon possession limit was set at 25 and the individual/household subsistence Sockeye Salmon annual limit was set at 100. Preliminary personal use/subsistence harvest records indicate that 5,850 Sockeye Salmon were harvested from the Redoubt system under 246 subsistence/personal use permits. Approximately 5,549 Sockeye Salmon were harvested in Sitka Sound commercial fishery openings throughout the season. Most of these Sockeye Salmon are probably of Redoubt origin.



**Figure 4. Annual total weir count (light blue) and expanded escapement estimates (dark purple) of sockeye salmon at Redoubt Lake for years with data. The red dashed line indicates a break in data from 1955 to 1982. The weir was similarly not operated in 1998.**

**Gut Bay** - The Gut Bay weir project was not funded in the latest FRMP cycle.

**Wrangell Area, Forest Service, Tongass National Forest Kevin Kocarek - Kevin.kocarek@usda (907)772-3871**

**Stikine River** – The 2023 pre-season terminal run forecast for large Chinook Salmon in the Stikine River is 11,700 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 2023 Stikine River pre-season Sockeye Salmon forecast is 86,000 fish, with 57,000 Tahltan and 29,000 Mainstem fish. The 2022 Sockeye Salmon forecast is 56,000 fish, which includes 28,000 Tahltan Lake and 28,000 Mainstem Sockeye. The escapement objective for Tahltan bound Sockeye Salmon is 18,000 fish and 30,000 for Mainstem fish.

The 2023 Federal Stikine River Subsistence Sockeye Salmon subsistence fishery will begin June 21. The current river height at the mouth is 17.9 feet which is average for this time of the year. A total of 12 permits have been issued for the Stikine Subsistence fishery and no harvest estimate is available at this time.

### **2023 Stikine Chinook Fishery is Closed**

Wrangell District Ranger Victoria Houser, under authority delegated by the Federal Subsistence Board, has closed the Federal subsistence Chinook Salmon fishery in the Stikine River May 15–June 20, 2023. The preseason forecast for the Stikine River is 11,700 large Chinook Salmon (greater than 28 inches in total length), which is below the escapement goal range of 14,000 to 28,000 large Chinook Salmon. The closure of the Chinook Salmon fishery does not affect other Stikine River Federal subsistence fisheries beginning June 21, 2023.

### **2023 Stikine Sockeye and Coho Salmon**

The Stikine River forecast is for an 86,000 Sockeye Salmon run which includes 57,000 Tahltan and 29,000 mainstem fish. This forecast results in a U.S. AC of 17,500 Tahltan and zero mainstem fish. The Federal Subsistence Sockeye Fishery on the Stikine is from June 21 through July 31. The Subsistence Coho Salmon Fishery on the Stikine is from August 1 through October 1.

**North Zone Tongass National Forest - Juneau, Hoonah, Admiralty Area and Yakutat – Forest Service, -Jake Musslewhite, 907-789-6256**  
[jacob.g.musslewhite@usda.gov](mailto:jacob.g.musslewhite@usda.gov)

**Situk River** – Remains closed to harvest of Chinook Salmon under both State and Federal regulations due to conservation concerns. One Chinook Salmon has been reported through the Situk Weir (June 5).

Nothing else to report at this time.

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

USFS Weekly Summary Author position vacant - TBA. Reports expected soon this season once staffing is complete.

Prince of Wales

**Hetta Lake** – The Hetta Lake weir is fish tight, and the Hydaburg Cooperative Association staff are expecting their first Sockeye Salmon to pass the weir in a few weeks.

**Eek Lake** – The Hydaburg Cooperative Association and Forest Service staff are assembling the weir next week and will be equipping the weir with a video monitoring system.

**Petersburg - Tongass National Forest. Robert Cross – Contact (907)-723-8653  
Or robert.cross@usda.gov**

Nothing to report at this time.

### **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](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.RI>

*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, 6/12/2023 Update – Dave Sarafin, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve (WRST), (907) 822-7281, dave\_sarafin@nps.gov**

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG) has limited the commercial fishery in the Copper River District in response to low numbers of salmon observed in run strength indices. There were seven 12-hour fishing periods, through June 5, with a cumulative harvest reported as 425,000 Sockeye Salmon and 8,240 Chinook Salmon through that date. The fishing period that closed on June 5 resulted in a harvest of 44,830 Sockeye Salmon and 1,290 Chinook Salmon. The Copper River District is presently open (June 12 for a 12-hour period).

The ADFG sonar at Miles Lake (located just downstream of the Million Dollar Bridge in the Copper River) began limited operation of only the North Bank sonar on May 22. Salmon passage was first recorded on May 25. Early season ice flow delayed the

operation of the South Bank sonar, which began operation on May 25. As of June 11, 186,544 salmon have been estimated migrating upstream for the season; this is 63% of the management objective of 298,056 for this date. A daily estimate of 8,153 salmon migrated by the sonar on June 11.

Performance in the commercial fishery and in river sonar salmon passage estimates are the primary early season assessments of the Sockeye Salmon return to the Copper River. The commercial harvest is below expected. The sonar season total estimate is well below the management objective. However, it is important to keep in mind that the Copper Basin experienced record snowfalls during the winter of 2023 which combined with a late and condensed melt off period in late May (similar to the conditions of 2022). Effects of this snow melt are still being observed in groundwater runoff in areas of the Copper River Basin. The winter snow level, delayed timing of the melt off, and relatively cold early season water temperatures could be associated with delays in the salmon return. Federal managers will continue to monitor run strength indices to evaluate the need for appropriate fisheries management actions in the Copper River Drainage. No Federal Special Actions have been issued by the in-season manager this season.

The State subsistence fishery in the Glennallen Subdistrict opened June 1. The State personal use fishery in the Chitina Subdistrict has been announced to open on June 15. This initial open period was delayed until June 15 due to poor early season run assessments.

The Federal subsistence fisheries in the Chitina Subdistrict, the Glennallen Subdistrict, and the Batzulnetas vicinity opened on May 15 and are expected to remain open through September 30. Data from the Office of Subsistence Management (OSM) Federal subsistence permit website indicate that 112 Chitina Subdistrict permits, 149 Glennallen Subdistrict permits, and zero Batzulnetas permits have been issued to date.

The Federal subsistence salmon fishery in the Lower Copper River near Cordova is open from June 1 through September 30. Salmon harvest is only allowed in the Copper River within ½ mile of the Copper River Highway, only by dip net or rod and reel, dip netting from boats is prohibited, and all salmon harvest must be reported within 48 hours. Permits are available at the Cordova Ranger Station (Chugach National Forest). To date, there have been 29 permits issued through the OSM database, with a harvest of 2 salmon reported as of June 9.

With funding through the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program (FRMP), WRST is planning to operate the Tanada Creek salmon weir located at Batzulnetas. Due to record winter snowfall and delayed warming this spring, groundwater and creek level conditions have limited our ability to install the weir. A site visit was performed on June 7 to begin preparing for installation.

Links:

ADFG Miles Lake daily sonar estimates

[http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareacopperriver.salmon\\_escapement](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareacopperriver.salmon_escapement)

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>

**PWS, Copper River Delta, Chugach – Dr. Andrew Sanders, Chugach National Forest, Cordova. May 29, 2023 Contact – (907) 250-0439 or [Andrew.sanders@usda.gov](mailto:Andrew.sanders@usda.gov)**

Prince William Sound / Copper River Delta: The lower Copper River dipnet fishery opened on June 1<sup>st</sup>. As of Friday afternoon June 9, 27 permits had been issued, and users reported a cumulative harvest of 2 Sockeye. Snow drifts along the Copper River Highway are still making it difficult to access the dipnet harvest area beyond the 27 mile bridge. 156,164 Sockeye have so far been counted at the Miles Lake Sonar Station.

Run timing for Sockeye Salmon is late compared to recent years, but an increasing trend in daily counts suggests a late peak that is yet to arrive. Daily high water temperatures in the Glacier River have been below the 10 year median for 20 of the last 30 days, and have averaged 5.3°C, over the last week. Median daily average temperature for June 9<sup>th</sup> over the last 10 years is 4.7°C. Gauge height on the Copper River at the Million Dollar Bridge has ranged from 40.5m to 41.5m since ice out in mid-May. That stage was relatively high for May, but now is somewhat low for June, resulting in a flatter hydrograph compared to recent years which have shown a stronger spring melt signal by early June. It remains to be seen if cool and wet late spring conditions are delaying the run.

Commercial harvest in the Copper River Delta Drift Gillnet fishery most recently peaked at 138,748 Sockeye Salmon during the May 23<sup>rd</sup> opener. A cumulative total of 424,979 Sockeye Salmon have been reported in the commercial harvest. Chinook Salmon harvest most recently peaked at 1,575 fish on May 22, but has averaged 1,060 fish per bi-weekly opener since then (range 757-1,259), with 1,259 reported in the most recent harvest (June 25).

For further information about the federal subsistence fishery in the Lower Copper River, users can contact the US Forest Service Cordova District office by calling 907-424-7661 or Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve staff -- Dave Sarafin at 907-822-7281 or Barbara Cellarius at 907-822-7236. Updates regarding changes affecting the Federal subsistence fisheries in the Copper River are available by calling the Wrangell-St. Elias Visitor Center at 907-822-7250.

**CORRECTION:** Last week (5MAY23) it was reported that 91 Lower Copper River Dipnet permits had been issues. That was the total number for 2022 & 2023. The correct number that should have been reported was 22. The total count at the Miles Lake Sonar Station was reported as 14,904. That was the daily count on June 4; the correct cumulative count was 86,933.

**COOK INLET AREA – Kenneth Gates, Senior Fish Biologist, Kenai Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office Contact:(907)260-0126 or [kenneth\\_gates@fws.gov](mailto:kenneth_gates@fws.gov)**

The 2023 Cook Inlet Federal subsistence fishing is nearing. Federal fisheries on Kenai and Kasilof rivers begin June 15 and June 16, respectively. Regulatory dates for the Kasilof River community gillnet fishery are from June 16 through August 15. Regulatory periods for the Kenai River community gillnet fishery are from July 1 through August 15 and from September 10 – 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 on Sockeye Salmon in the Upper Kenai and Russian Rivers which opens June 11.

A total of 352 permits have been issued to date to residents of Cooper Landing, Hope, and Ninilchik. Permit types include a general fishing, household, designated fisher, and community gillnet permits.

No special actions have been issued to date. However, escapement is poor for early Chinook Salmon returning to the Kenai River and other Cook Inlet streams. State fisheries targeting these fish have already been restricted. Current pre-season projections for the early and late-run Kenai River large Chinook Salmon are 2,914 and 13,630, respectively. Each projection is well below the lower end of the Optimum Escapement Goals.

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>

**Kodiak Island Area – Michael Brady, Refuge Manager, - Kodiak NWR**  
(907) 487-2600/0230 [michael\\_brady@fws.gov](mailto:michael_brady@fws.gov) or  
Kevin Van Hatten (907) 487-0230 [Kevin\\_VanHatten@fws.gov](mailto:Kevin_VanHatten@fws.gov)

The 2023 Sockeye Salmon monitoring programs operated by Alaska Department of Fish and Game was initialized during the last week of May, beginning of June. The Sockeye Salmon returns have started slow and continue to be poor, except for Karluk River. The Sockeye Salmon season is still early and there are indications that although the numbers being recorded are low, there is still time for the runs to materialize.

There has not been much subsistence fishing activity along the road system, which could be due to unfavorable weather conditions. The Sockeye Salmon counts for Buskin River are very low and as of June 7, 2023, the recorded number of Sockeye Salmon passing the weir was 111 fish. This count is well below the 9-year average of 1,383 fish. Litnik Sockeye Salmon, 1,292 fish as of June 7, 2023, is doing a better than the Buskin River Sockeye Salmon, but is still below the 9-year average, 8,697 fish.



The systems being monitored on the southern part of Kodiak Island are fair, except for the Ayakulik River. The Karluk River Sockeye Salmon escapement total is 81,121 fish, which is above the 9-year average of 64,070 fish. The Ayakulik River Sockeye Salmon escapement is poor, as only 268 fish have been recorded through the weir, as of June 7, 2023. The cumulative count is below the 9-year average of 35,918 fish. Upper Station has been recording some good numbers of Sockeye Salmon migrating into the system with a count to date of 6,535 fish, but these numbers are still below the 9-year average of 15,361 fish.

The Chinook Salmon counts for Ayakulik and Karluk Rivers are very weak, as forecasted by ADF&G. AD&G has set restrictions on sport fishing on both rivers for Chinook salmon.

Any additional information pertaining to subsistence harvest will be provided in next week report.

### **FISHERIES UPDATE FOR THE WEEK OF June 12, 2023.**

#### ***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. None of the adjustments in commercial fishing management throughout any of these areas are anticipated to affect subsistence fishing in Federally-managed waters.

#### **Bristol Bay:**

The 2023 Bristol Bay Sockeye Salmon run is forecast to be approximately 51 million fish for the nine river systems: Kvichak, Alagnak, Naknek, Egegik, Ugashik, Wood, Igushik, Nushagak, and Togiak. Based on the forecast 38 million fish are available for harvest. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game has strategies in place for all mixed stock districts to address differential run strength should that occur. Gillnets are the primary gear used for most subsistence fishing for salmon. A permit is required for subsistence harvest of salmon.

The commercial salmon season in Bristol Bay opens June 1 by regulation and commercial fishing openings have been announced.

Escapement projects are still be installed in the region.

Escapement Goals:

Kvichak	SEG = 2,000,000 – 10,000,000
Alagnak	SEG = minimum of 210,000
Naknek	SEG = 800,000 – 2,000,000
Egegik	SEG = 800,000 – 2,000,000
Ugashik	SEG = 500,000 – 1,400,000
Wood River	SEG = 700,000 – 3,000,000
Igushik	SEG = 150,000 – 400,000
Nushagak	SEG = 370,000 – 1,940,000
Nushagak	SEG = 55,000 – 120,000 Chinook Salmon
Togiak	SEG = 120,000 – 270,000

Chignik:

Current counts at the ADFG Chignik River as of June 11 are 912 Sockeye Salmon. This is significantly lower than the escapement objectives for the week of June 10 of 12,500 to 50,000 fish. Water is reported to be cold and slow starts to fish passage are reported across other Alaska fisheries.

The 2023 Sockeye Salmon forecasted total-run size for the Chignik River Management Area (CMA) is 1,524,000 fish with a harvest estimate of 889,000 Sockeye Salmon. The CMA is composed of five fishing districts: Eastern, Central, Chignik Bay, Western, and Perryville. The Board of Fisheries made many notable changes to the Chignik Area Salmon Management Plan and are outlined here:

<https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/FedAidPDFs/RIR.4K.2023.07.pdf>

Escapement Goals:

Early Run Sockeye Salmon/ Black Lake	OEG = 300,000 – 400,000
Late Run Sockeye Salmon/ Chignik Lake	OEG = 240,000 – 360,000

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:

The 2023 preseason forecasts are made only for the Nelson River and late-run (post July 31) Bear Lake stocks. The 2023 Sockeye Salmon run size projections are 177,000 fish for the Nelson River and 354,000 fish for late-run Bear Lake. A permit is required for subsistence harvest of salmon.

Current counts for Sockeye Salmon at installed escapement projects for June 11:

Nelson = 29  
 Bear = 36, Chinook 1  
 Ilnik = 6,051  
 Orzinski = Fish tight June 11 at 5:45 pm

Sandy = 0  
 McLees = 152

Commercial fishing periods have been announced.

Escapement Goals:

Nelson River	BEG = 97,000 – 219,000
Late-run Bear Lake	BEG = 117,000 – 195,000

Aleutian Islands.

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

### **Yukon River –USFWS Fairbanks Office. June 5-June 11, 2023**

Federal Manager, Holly Carroll (907) 351-3029, [holly\\_carroll@fws.gov](mailto:holly_carroll@fws.gov)

#### **Assessment Information**

The first Chinook and Chum Salmon have been caught on June 8<sup>th</sup> at Lower Yukon Test Fishery (which is almost a week later than normal), but no other reports of salmon catches have come in from communities. Pilot Station sonar is hampered by high water, but hoping to produce estimates soon. They have caught a few sheefish in their test fishery but no salmon and very few fish overall. Water levels are still record high in some places.

Assessment project and management updates will be given on the **YRDFA weekly teleconferences each Tuesday at 1:00 pm at the following number: 1-800-315-6338, Passcode: 98566#.**

#### **Management Strategies based on the preseason outlooks and inseason assessment:**

The Office of Subsistence Management (OSM) received special action request FSA23-02 asking the Federal Subsistence Board (Board) to close Federal public waters of the Yukon River drainage to the harvest of Chinook, Chum and Coho salmon except by federally qualified subsistence users from June 1 through September 30, 2023, and to require that Federal subsistence fishing schedules, openings, closures and methods be determined by the Federal Fisheries Manager. This request falls within the scope of authority of the Federal manager, Holly Carroll and has been transferred to her by the Board. Subsistence salmon fishery closures began in the lower river June 2, and will be announced moving upriver based on run timing. See detailed management strategy here: [2023 FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE FISHERY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR THE YUKON AREA \(doi.gov\)](#)

This week's Advisory Announcements co-authored by ADF&G and USFWS and distributed by ADF&G were:

- Yukon River Summer Update #1:  
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/applications/dcfnewsrelease/1478261594.pdf>

- Closures in District 4:  
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/applications/dcfnewsrelease/1479130336.pdf>

**Where to Find Yukon Fishery Information:**

To hear the fishing schedule and fish counts please call the toll-free Fishing Schedule and Fish Counts hotline: 866-479-7387.

Recent Fishery special actions are posted here:

<https://www.doi.gov/subsistence/fisheries-special-actions>

For Federal News Releases and Special actions, like

[www.facebook.com/subsistencealaska](http://www.facebook.com/subsistencealaska).

For detailed information on management actions and weekly assessment updates, subscribe to ADF&G advisory announcements at

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

For daily counts and State Advisory announcements like the ADF&G Yukon River Facebook page at: [www.facebook.com/YukonRiverFishingADFG/](http://www.facebook.com/YukonRiverFishingADFG/)

If you'd like to receive emails and notifications on the Federal Subsistence Management Program you may subscribe for regular updates by emailing [fws-fsb-subsistence-request@lists.fws.gov](mailto:fws-fsb-subsistence-request@lists.fws.gov)

**In Season Manager – Boyd Blihovde, Refuge Manager, Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge** [Boyd\\_Blihovde@fws.gov](mailto:Boyd_Blihovde@fws.gov); Contact Spencer Reardon (907)543-1023 or [spencer\\_reardon@fws.gov](mailto:spencer_reardon@fws.gov)

No report submitted for this period.

**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](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](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](mailto:Ken_Adkisson@nps.gov)

There is still considerable ice in the Nome area, through the Bering Strait and northward. The ice continues to melt, break up and drift with the winds and currents, Marine mammals remain much of the subsistence focus for the more northern communities. However, the herring are arriving in southern Norton Sound.

### **Norton Sound District**

Herring have arrived in southern Norton Sound with Norton Sound Economic Development Corporation (NSEDC) reporting approximately 12.5 miles of active spawning near Wood Point. Commercial herring fishing opened on June 1 and Norton Sound Seafood Products in Unalakleet is registered to buy herring and is planning on purchasing 25 tons of herring for bait.

Subsistence fishing for herring and spawn- on- kelp gathering remains open 7 days per week and does not require a subsistence permit to participate.

### ***Sport Fishing:***

To help protect king salmon during periods of low abundance and provide future sport fishing opportunities, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game is closing all fresh waters in Northwest Alaska from Bald Head to Point Romanof to sport fishing for king salmon effective 12:01 a.m. April 5, 2023. This closure includes, but is not limited to, the Unalakleet, Shaktoolik, Koyuk, Ungalik, Inglutalik, and Golsovia River drainages. In addition, only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used in these drainages. Restricting fishing gear to one unbaited, single-hook artificial lure should minimize catch-and-release mortality for king salmon incidentally caught while sport fishing for other species. All king salmon caught incidentally may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately.

These temporary regulations will remain in effect through August 15, 2023, or until there are indications of a harvestable surplus of king salmon above escapement objectives. Escapements are determined by counts compiled at a counting tower on the North River, a tributary of the Unalakleet River, and counts at a floating weir located on the mainstem Unalakleet River.

The 2023 preseason outlook for the Unalakleet River drainage king salmon run is low, and the number of returning king salmon may be insufficient to meet escapement objectives and provide a moderate harvestable surplus for the subsistence fishery. According to the Subdistricts 5 and 6 of the Norton Sound District and the Unalakleet River King Salmon Management Plan (5 AAC 04.395), when the inriver subsistence fishery is closed to the retention of king salmon, sport fishing for king salmon will be closed. At this time, restrictions are planned to close the inriver Unalakleet River subsistence fishery for king salmon effective June 15, 2023. The Shaktoolik, Koyuk, Ungalik, Inglutalik, and Golsovia River drainages are closed as well because the department does not have reliable information for these stocks. However, these stocks trend similar to the Unalakleet River stock and are managed as a unit.

The department will continue to evaluate inseason run strength and take appropriate management actions to help meet escapement objectives. If inseason stock assessment information indicates that the king salmon escapement goal in the Unalakleet River will be met.

### ***Shaktoolik (5) and Unalakleet (6) Subdistricts***

The Shaktoolik and Unalakleet Subdistricts will close to subsistence fishing in the marine and freshwaters in order to provide for conservation of king salmon returning to those subdistricts beginning June 15. King salmon escapements have not met escapement goals in recent years and the ADF&G is planning on managing more conservatively in 2023 to give more protection to king salmon migrating through the area. The Department plans offering weekly subsistence opportunity in the marine waters of the Shaktoolik and Unalakleet Subdistricts with time and net restrictions beyond the schedule listed in the regulation. The department will relax the restrictions if inseason projections point to king salmon meeting escapement objectives. The Department will relax restrictions in July after king salmon have migrated through the area or if escapements are adequate to allow for harvest. Additionally, beach seining will be permitted starting in July. However, any king salmon caught must be immediately released unharmed.

Subdistricts 5 (Shaktoolik) and 6 (Unalakleet) have been managed as one fishery because past studies have shown salmon bound for these subdistricts intermingle and that harvests in one subdistrict likely will affect the other. No commercial fishing is expected for Chinook or chum salmon, but pink salmon will be targeted commercially depending on buyer interest and gillnet fishing would likely occur beginning in July.

Abundance of the Chinook salmon run will be monitored using passage estimates from the Unalakleet River weir and a counting tower on the North River, an important Chinook salmon spawning tributary in the Unalakleet River drainage. The escapement goal range for the North River is 1,200–2,600 Chinook salmon. However, for a Chinook

salmon directed commercial fishery to occur, the department must project an escapement of a minimum of 1,900 Chinook salmon past the North River tower.

***NORTON Bay Subdistrict (4)***

Except as noted previously, subsistence fishing will be allowed 7 days per week. Limited commercial fishing is likely to occur with time and gear restrictions.

***Elim Subdistrict (3)***

Except as noted previously, subsistence fishing will be allowed 7 days per week. Limited commercial fishing is likely to occur with time and gear restrictions.

***Golovin Subdistrict (2)***

Except as noted previously, subsistence fishing will be allowed 7 days per week. Limited commercial fishing is likely to occur with time and gear restrictions.

***Nome Subdistrict (1)***

Subdistrict 1 (Nome) is currently open to subsistence fishing 7 days per week. After June 15<sup>th</sup>, the fresh waters of the Subdistrict will be placed on a weekly fishing schedule. The subdistrict will be open to subsistence net fishing on a weekly basis from 6:00 p.m. Wednesdays to 6:00 p.m. Mondays through August 31. The fresh waters of the Subdistrict will be open to subsistence net fishing on a weekly basis from 6:00 p.m. Wednesdays to 6:00 p.m. Mondays. In the marine waters of the Subdistrict, subsistence net fishing is open on a weekly basis from 6:00 p.m. Wednesdays until 6:00 p.m. Mondays west of Cape Nome, In the marine waters east of Cape Nome. subsistence net fishing will remain open 7 days per week The marine waters schedule will remain in effect through August 15, 2023. Dip nets and cast nets can be used as subsistence gear when the area is open to other gear. Additionally, beach seining is allowed when the area is open for subsistence fishing with other gear from June 15 through August 15 These fishing schedules will remain in effect unless reduced by emergency order due to abundance concerns.

**Port Clarence District**

No commercial fishing periods are expected due to lack of market interest and the likelihood of sockeye salmon escapement goals not being met. The Pilgrim River will be closed to subsistence net fishing. Escapement will be monitored and if run strength warrants it, restrictions may be relaxed. Subsistence net fishing will be open 7 days per week outside of the Pilgrim River closed area.

**Kotzebue District**

No new information is currently available. If you read last week’s report, you can stop here. If not, read on.

2023 Season Outlook: \*

The Kotzebue District salmon fisheries management outlook is to inform fishermen, processors, and other interested people of the management strategies for the commercial salmon fishery. The Kotzebue District includes all waters from Cape Prince of Wales to Point Hope. The Kotzebue District is divided into three subdistricts. Subdistrict 2, near the mouth of the Noatak River is closed to commercial fishing by regulation. Most fishing occurs in Subdistrict 1, which is subdivided into six statistical areas to help managers determine catch location. Within the Kotzebue District, chum salmon *Oncorhynchus keta* are the most abundant anadromous fish. Other salmon species (Chinook *O. tshawytscha*, pink *O. gorbuscha*, coho *O. kisutch*, and sockeye salmon *O. nerka*) occur in lesser numbers, as do Dolly Varden *Salvelinus malma*, and sheefish (inconnu) *Stenodus leucichthys*.

<b>Management Area</b>	<b>Chinook</b>	<b>Sockeye</b>	<b>Coho</b>	<b>Pink</b>	<b>Summer Chum</b>	<b>Fall Cum</b>
<b>Kotzebue</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>300-400</b>

\*The 2023 all-salmon commercial harvest outlook by management area, in thousands of fish.

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Historical Fishing Effort

*Subsistence Fishery*

Subsistence fishing has long been an important food gathering activity for people of the Kotzebue Sound drainages. The most recent subsistence survey of salmon harvest is from 2014 that estimated a total of 30,640 chum salmon that were harvested from the Kobuk



River, and 6,577 chum salmon that were harvested from the Noatak River and Kotzebue residents reported a harvest of 21,144 chum salmon with the majority harvested in marine waters. Over 90% of the subsistence salmon harvests are chum salmon.

### *Commercial Fishery*

There have been two major buyers in the commercial fishery in recent years. In 2018, there was a record harvest of 695,153 chum salmon caught by 95 permit holders that sold chum salmon for an average price of \$0.40 per pound. The 2019 harvest was 494,593 chum salmon caught by 92 permit holders that sold chum salmon for an average price of \$0.39 per pound and in 2020 only 149,808 chum salmon were harvested by 68 permit holders for an average price of \$0.45 per pound. During the 2021 season, 96,492 chum salmon were harvested by 52 permit holders for an average price of \$0.46 per pound.

<http://alaska.fws.gov/asm/pdf/fishregs11/norton.pdf>