

FISHERIES UPDATE FOR THE WEEK OF JULY 3-9, 2023. Report #7

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**Yakutat**

Susan Oehlers, Forest Service, Tongass National Forest, (907)784-3359;
susan.oehlers@usda.gov

- **Situk River** – Remains closed to harvest of Chinook Salmon under Federal regulations due to conservation concerns.

Juneau

- **Sockeye** – Forest Service staff teamed up with the Angoon Youth Stewards last week on a subsistence sockeye harvest effort. Our first attempt was at Sitkoh Creek, but there were few fish present and we ended up with a handful of water hauls. Things went better at Basket Bay, where we harvested 87 Sockeye in a few sets. There were plenty of jumpers in the bay, as well. The fish were brought back to Angoon and distributed to elders in the community.

Sheet'ká and Xunaa (Sitka and Hoonah) Area

Ashley Bolwerk, Forest Service, Tongass National Forest, (907)747-4299;
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.
- **Chaa's Geeyí (Klag Bay)** - The Sitka Tribe of Alaska operates the sockeye salmon monitoring weir at Klag Bay which was operational as of June 25. As of July 9, two sockeye have entered the lake. 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 harvest accounted for approximately 99% of terminal area harvest.

- **Redoubt Lake** - The Forest Service operates the Redoubt Lake weir which was operational as of June 12. As of July 9, 30,510 sockeye have entered the lake. On June 28, the Alaska Department of Fish and game [announced a liberalization](#) of the state personal use and subsistence fishery at Redoubt would take affect on July 1. This emergency order changes the sockeye salmon limit, in both the state and federal subsistence fisheries, to 25 sockeye salmon per household with an annual limit of 100 sockeye salmon per household. On July 10, the federal subsistence harvest was increased to 50 sockeye per household per day with no annual limit, through an emergency special action using the Federal Subsistence Board delegated authority.

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 possession limit was set at 25 and the individual/household subsistence sockeye 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 are probably of Redoubt origin.



SCA technician sampling fish (photo credit: Elizabeth Klein)



Dip netters at Redoubt (photo credit: Joe Serio)

Admiralty

- **Salmon fisheries** – Salmon returns are looking better than expected overall for the Admiralty/Chatham Strait area. Test fisheries at the Hawk Inlet shoreline have produced catches above the 10-year average, and there are jumpers all over. Angoon residents are reporting lots of pinks and coho for this time of year.
- **Sitkoh Lake** – The weir will be installed this week.

Kaachxana.áak'w and Séet Ká Kwáan (Wrangell and Petersburg) Area

Kevin Kocarek, Forest Service, Tongass National Forest, (907) 874-2323

kevin.kocarek@usda.gov

- **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 began June 21. A total of 74 permits have been issued for the Stikine Subsistence fishery with an estimated harvest of 486 Sockeye Salmon.

Prince of Wales

- **Hetta Lake** – The Hetta Lake weir is fish tight, and the Hydaburg Cooperative Association staff have passed 150 Sockeye Salmon so far.
- **Eek Lake** – The Eek Lake weir is fish tight, and the Hydaburg Cooperative Association staff have passed 16 Sockeye Salmon so far.

Yakutat

Susan Oehlers, Forest Service, Tongass National Forest, (907)784-3359;
susan.oehlers@usda.gov

- **Situk River** – Remains closed to harvest of Chinook Salmon under Federal regulations due to conservation concerns.

Juneau

- **Sockeye** – Forest Service staff teamed up with the Angoon Youth Stewards last week on a subsistence sockeye harvest effort. Our first attempt was at Sitkoh Creek, but there were few fish present and we ended up with a handful of water hauls. Things went better at Basket Bay, where we harvested 87 Sockeye in a few sets. There were plenty of jumpers in the bay, as well. The fish were brought back to Angoon and distributed to elders in the community.

Sheet'ká and Xunaa (Sitka and Hoonah) Area

Ashley Bolwerk, Forest Service, Tongass National Forest, (907)747-4299;
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.
- **Chaa's Geeyí (Klag Bay)** - The Sitka Tribe of Alaska operates the sockeye salmon monitoring weir at Klag Bay which was operational as of June 25. As of July 9, two sockeye have entered the lake. 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 harvest accounted for approximately 99% of terminal area harvest.
- **Redoubt Lake** - The Forest Service operates the Redoubt Lake weir which was operational as of June 12. As of July 9, 30,510 sockeye have entered the lake. On June 28, the Alaska Department of Fish and game [announced a liberalization](#) of the state personal use and subsistence fishery at Redoubt would take affect on July 1. This emergency order changes the sockeye salmon limit, in both the state and federal subsistence fisheries, to 25 sockeye salmon per household with an annual limit of 100 sockeye salmon per household. On July 10, the federal subsistence harvest was increased to 50 sockeye per household per day with no

annual limit, through an emergency special action using the Federal Subsistence Board delegated authority.

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 possession limit was set at 25 and the individual/household subsistence sockeye 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 are probably of Redoubt origin.



SCA technician sampling fish (photo credit: Elizabeth Klein)



Dip netters at Redoubt (photo credit: Joe Serio)

Admiralty

- **Salmon fisheries** – Salmon returns are looking better than expected overall for the Admiralty/Chatham Strait area. Test fisheries at the Hawk Inlet shoreline have produced catches above the 10-year average, and there are jumpers all over. Angoon residents are reporting lots of pinks and coho for this time of year.
- **Sitkoh Lake** – The weir will be installed this week.

Kaachxana.áak'w and Séet Ká Kwáan (Wrangell and Petersburg) Area

Kevin Kocarek, Forest Service, Tongass National Forest, (907) 874-2323

kevin.kocarek@usda.gov

- **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 began June 21. A total of 74 permits have been issued for the Stikine Subsistence fishery with an estimated harvest of 486 Sockeye Salmon.

Prince of Wales

- **Hetta Lake** – The Hetta Lake weir is fish tight, and the Hydaburg Cooperative Association staff have passed 150 Sockeye Salmon so far.
- **Eek Lake** – The Eek Lake weir is fish tight, and the Hydaburg Cooperative Association staff have passed 16 Sockeye Salmon so far.

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>

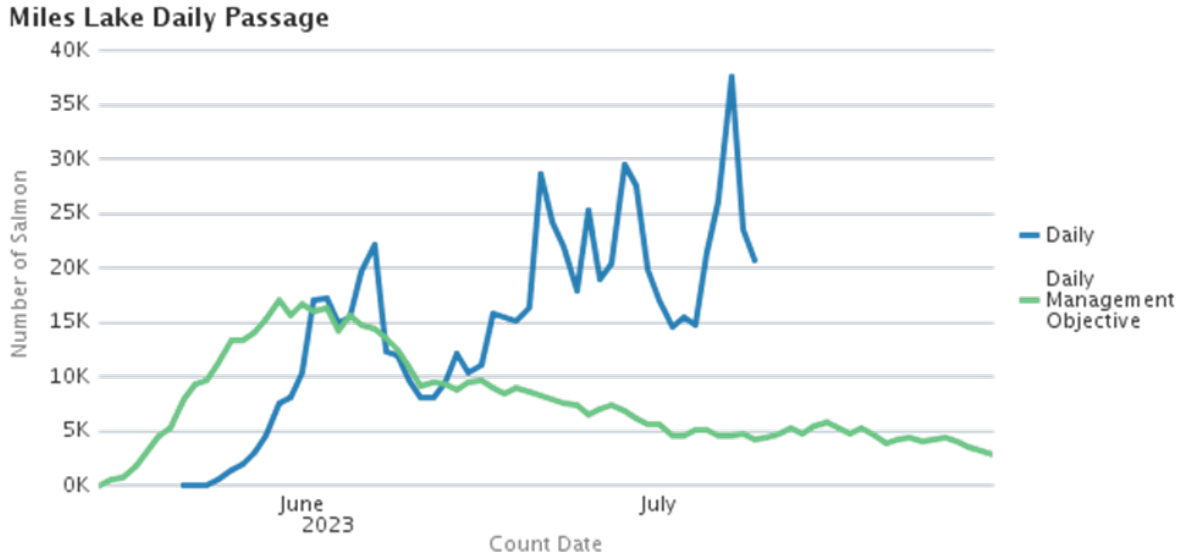
Statewide ADF&G Fish counts
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/FishCounts/>

SOUTHCENTRAL ALASKA

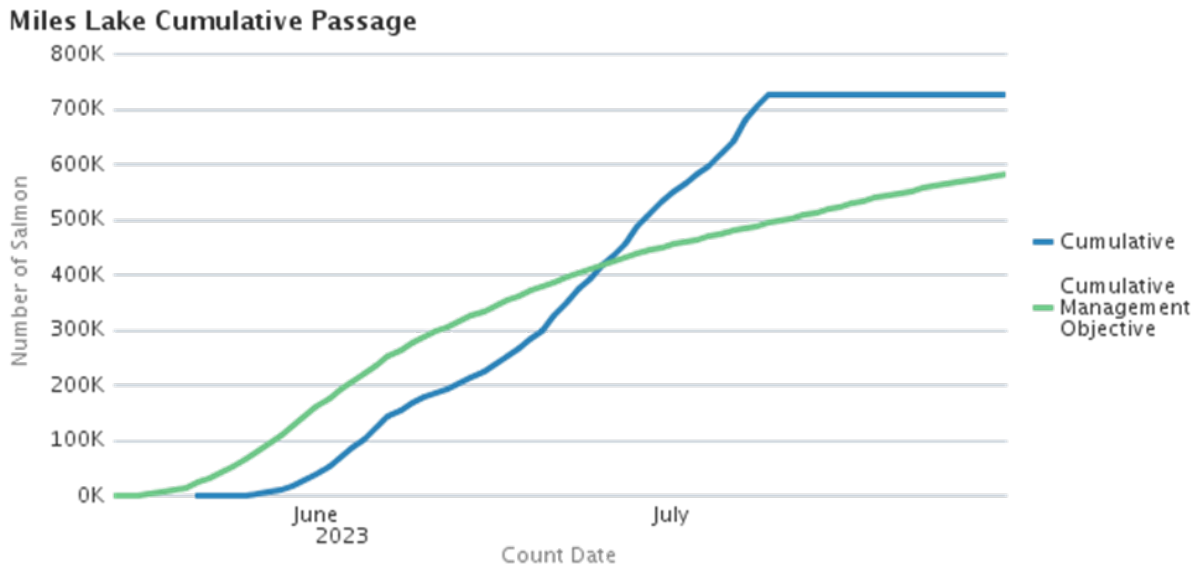
Copper River, 7/10/2023 Update – Dave Sarafin, Copper River Federal Fisheries Management Biologist, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve (WRST), (907) 822-7281, dave_sarafin@nps.gov

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG) has authorized 14 commercial fishing periods in the Copper River District through July 10. Total harvest through July 8 is reported as 635,400 Sockeye Salmon and 9,980 Chinook Salmon. The fishery opened today, July 10, for a 48-hour fishing period.

As of July 9, the ADFG sonar at Miles Lake (located just downstream of the Million Dollar Bridge in the Copper River) has estimated the passage of 726,543 salmon migrating upstream for the season. The cumulative passage is now 48% above the management objective of 489,957 salmon for this date of the season. A daily estimate of 20,742 salmon migrated by the sonar on July 9.



Graph of Copper River Salmon Daily Passage at Miles Lake Sonar through July 9, 2023



Graph of Copper River Salmon Cumulative Passage at Miles Lake Sonar through July 9, 2023

Sonar salmon passage estimates are the primary assessment tool for the Sockeye Salmon return to the Copper River. The sonar season total estimate is now well above the management objective. Salmon passage rates have exceeded daily management objectives since June 13 and the escapement goal for the season has already been achieved. Salmon harvest is being reported throughout the river.

As with Sockeye Salmon, fisheries managers are also monitoring Chinook Salmon run strength; a primary assessment tool of in-river abundance is the Chinook Salmon mark-

recapture project operated by the Native Village of Eyak (NVE). Recent data assessment by the State project an in-river abundance of 55,000 or more Chinook Salmon; at a level that should provide sustainable escapement and continue to provide harvest opportunities throughout the drainage.

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 opened periodically in association with the numbers of salmon estimated passing the Miles Lake sonar.

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. Records of the Office of Subsistence Management (OSM) Federal subsistence permit website indicate that 180 Chitina Subdistrict, 251 Glennallen Subdistrict, and 1 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. To date, there have been 43 permits issued through the OSM database. Through July 4, a total of 78 Sockeye Salmon and 4 Chinook Salmon have been reported for the season.



Tanada Creek Salmon Weir, 2023

With funding through the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program (FRMP), WRST is again operating the Tanada Creek salmon weir located at Batzulnetas. Installation of the weir was completed on June 22. Staff are in the process of reviewing video data since the weir was completed. The first Sockeye Salmon was documented passing the weir on June 23; an incomplete review of video data through July 1 has provided a partial count of 87 Sockeye.

Links:

ADFG Miles Lake daily sonar estimates

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. July 7, 2023 Contact – (907) 250-0439 or Andrew.sanders@usda.gov

Chugach National Forest and Prince William Sound

Prince William Sound / Copper River Delta: The lower Copper River dipnet fishery opened on June 1st. As of Friday morning 07JUL, 43 permits had been issued, and users reported a cumulative harvest of 78 Sockeye Salmon and 4 Chinook Salmon. The Copper River Highway is accessible to 36 Mile. For more information about conditions in the Copper River and the commercial drift gillnet fishery, please see the *Prince William Sound – Copper River* weekly update which can also be found in this report.

Water levels in area streams remain high from the persistent rains over the last few weeks. Anglers at Fleming Spit continue to harvest Chinook Salmon. Pink Salmon have begun to move in, and anglers are reporting high success in the lower stream reaches. In 2022, the 2nd week of July was the peak period for reported harvest for Sockeye Salmon outside the Copper River under subsistence regulations.

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. More information regarding the federal subsistence fisheries in the remainder of the Copper River Delta area and Prince William Sound can be obtained by contacting the Chugach National Forest Subsistence Staff – Andrew Sanders at 907-424-4759

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

The 2023 Cook Inlet Federal subsistence fishing is underway beginning on the Kenai and Kasilof rivers 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 opened June 11.

Federal subsistence fishing permits have been issued to 461 residents of Cooper Landing, Hope, Ninilchik, and Moose Pass. Permit types include a general fishing, household, designated fisher, and community gillnet permits. To date, 2,898 Sockeye Salmon have been reported as being harvested in all fisheries between the Kasilof and Kenai rivers: 1,618 by gillnet in the Kasilof River and 1,280 by dipnet at the Russian River falls through 7/9/2023.

No special actions have been issued for Cook Inlet Federal fisheries. However, escapement remains very poor for Chinook Salmon returning to upper Cook Inlet. The early-run Chinook Salmon escapement was not met in the Kenai River with only 1,961 large fish passing the Alaska Department of Fish and Game sonar by June 30, 2023. We will be closely monitoring the late-run Chinook Salmon escapement and Federal harvest of Chinook Salmon in the Kenai River and will take necessary action if warranted. The late-run of Chinook Salmon returning to the Kenai River is currently not predicted to meet the established in-river escapement goal.

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 or

Kevin Van Hatten (907) 487-0230 Kevin_VanHatten@fws.gov

Salmon returns within the Kodiak Management Area is in full swing with many systems meeting their lower escapement goals. The Litnik system started slow but has continued to be strong over the past week. Litnik River met its lower escapement goal on June 23, with 21,557 fish recorded through the weir. The Buskin River sockeye salmon escapement continues to be poor. The fishing restrictions continues to be in effect and likely remain in effect for the remainder of the season.

The Karluk River Sockeye salmon escapement has been strong with a cumulative to date count of 180,924 fish, as of July 8, 2023. The Ayakulik River met its lower escapement goal on July 1. Commercial fishing has been closed for the past week, which would give residents the opportunity to subsistence fish.

Sockeye salmon escapements within the Alitak Bay district have been strong. As of July 8, Upper Station recorded 59,726 fish passing the weir and Dog Salmon recorded 56,920 fish.

FISHERIES UPDATE FOR THE WEEK OF July 10, 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 (ADFG), 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 waters under Federal subsistence fisheries jurisdiction.

Bristol Bay:

Current counts for Sockeye Salmon at installed escapement projects for July 8:

Alagnak = No counts reported
 Egegik = 784,584
 Igushik = 218,322
 Kvichak = 1,186,440
 Naknek = 665,112
 Nushagak = 1,453,205; Chinook = 28,866
 Togiak = 22,278
 Ugashik = 44,622
 Wood River = 2,063,604

The Sockeye Salmon sustainable escapement goals (SEG) for Bristol Bay systems are:

Escapement Goals:

Kvichak	SEG = 2,000,000 – 10,000,000
Alagnak	SEG = 320,000 minimum
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 – 1,800,000
Igushik	SEG = 150,000 – 400,000

Nushagak SEG = 370,000 – 900,000
 Nushagak SEG = 55,000 – 270,000; Chinook Salmon = 55,000 – 120,000
 Togiak SEG = 120,000 – 270,000

Chignik:

The Chignik River cumulative weir count as of July 9 is 409,993 Sockeye Salmon. Early run Sockeye Salmon account for 368,255 fish and late run Sockeye Salmon account for 41,738 fish. The interim escapement objective for July 10 is around 262,000 – 392,000 early run fish and 20,000-58,000 late run fish.

There has been only 48 Chinook Salmon counted at the ADFG weir as of July 9. 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 Chinook salmon run, both state and Federal fisheries will be closed concurrently to maintain viability of the Chignik River Chinook salmon population. There is already non retention in the Chignik Bay and Central Districts, as well as the Castle Cape section of the Western District in the Chignik Management area this season. In an effort to conserve Chignik River Chinook salmon, in accordance with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game under the direction of the Alaska Board of Fisheries, beginning at 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, July 5, 2023, Chinook salmon in the Chignik Bay District 28 inches or greater in length may not be retained in the state subsistence fishery and must be returned to the water unharmed. In the Chignik River drainage, from Mensis Point upstream including Chignik Lake and its tributaries, all Chinook salmon may not be retained in the state subsistence fishery and must be returned to the water unharmed. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game, under the direction of the Alaska Board of Fisheries, manages sport, commercial, personal use, and state subsistence harvest on all lands and waters throughout Alaska.

Concurrent with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game closure of state subsistence Chinook salmon, the Federal In-season Manager, pursuant to delegated authority from the Federal Subsistence Board and Section 816 of Title VIII of ANILCA, issued an emergency special action (8-KS-01-23) to close fishing for Chinook salmon by all users, effective 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, July 5, 2023. This emergency special action is necessary to ensure the continued viability of the Chignik River Chinook salmon population. This emergency special action prohibits all fishing for Chinook salmon, and they may not be retained or possessed. Chinook salmon incidentally caught while fishing for other species may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately

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:

Federal managers conducted a public meeting in Cold Bay on Tuesday June 27 to answer questions and get feedback on the rescinded fish closures on Trout and Russell Creek.

Current counts for Sockeye Salmon at installed escapement projects for July 8:

Nelson = 104,457; Chinook = 2,494
 Bear = 43,583
 Ilnik = 87,326
 Orzinski = 4,313
 Sandy = 15,937
 McLees = 14,327

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. July 3-July 9, 2023

Federal Manager, Holly Carroll (907) 351-3029, holly_carroll@fws.gov

Assessment and Management Information

Summer chum run projections exceed the bottom end of drainage wide escapement goal (500,000-1.2 million). Selective gear openings (with dip nets, beach seines or manned fish wheels) began June 26th on the regulatory schedule, and were offered in all districts based on run timing. Due to the inefficiency of selective gear, and in order to give fishers the ability to fish during good weather or when it works for their schedule, Friday, July 7, announcements went out making selective fishing for summer chum available 24 hours per day, seven days per week. (These opportunities will not be announced for subdistrict 5-D as very few human-consumption quality summer chum travel through this subdistrict.) These chum salmon opportunities are limited to federally qualified users in federal public waters by Emergency special action [FSA-02-KS-01-23](#) , [FSA-02-KS-02-23](#), [FSA-02-KS-03-23](#) , [FSA-02-FSA-02-KS-04-23-04-23](#) [FSA-02-KS-05-23](#).

The Chinook salmon run is turning out to be as poor as expected, and the Canadian stock component is below average. The Chinook run is not large enough to meet escapement goals. The run is over 80% complete in the lower river and the early fish are just now being

detected at the Eagle sonar. Closures for harvest of Chinook continue to be warranted, **and it is imperative that all Chinook be released alive from selective gear.**

Andreafsky river weir installation was slowed greatly by high water, but the weir is likely to be fish tight before Monday. 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, were announced moving upriver based on run timing. See detailed management strategy here: [2023 FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE FISHERY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR THE YUKON AREA \(doi.gov\)](https://www.doi.gov/2023-federal-subsistence-fishery-management-strategy-for-the-yukon-area)

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

- Yukon River Summer Update #5:
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/applications/dcfnewsrelease/1499128659.pdf>
- Yukon River Subsistence fishing schedule Subdistrict 5 ABC (Advisory announcement #20):
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/applications/dcfnewsrelease/1500647953.pdf>
- Yukon River Subsistence fishing schedule Districts 1-5 ABC (Advisory announcement #21):
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/applications/dcfnewsrelease/1502460540.pdf>
- Yukon River Subsistence fishing schedule District 6 (Advisory announcement #22):
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/applications/dcfnewsrelease/1502632973.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.

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/

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

In Season Manager – Boyd Blihovde, Refuge Manager, Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge Boyd_Blihovde@fws.gov; Contact Spencer Reardon (907)543-1023 or spencer_reardon@fws.gov

For the June 30 set net opener (24 hours) an estimated total of 8,345 (5,981 – 12,242) salmon were harvested: Of which 593 (453 – 746) were Chinook, 1,298 (966 – 1,689) were chum, and 6,454 (4,219 – 10,096) were sockeye.

For the July 4 to July 6 set net opener (48 hours), harvest estimates were made for the first 15 hours of the opener. An estimated total of 1,629 (1,076 – 2,239) salmon were harvested: Of which 117 (47 – 212) were Chinook, 280 (154 – 442) were chum, and 1,232 (805 – 1,739) were sockeye.

The Bethel Test Fish and Kuskokwim River Sonar numbers for Chinook and chum salmon (<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareakuskokwim.salmon#fishcounts>) continue to indicate relatively low numbers. Sockeye salmon numbers are healthy and fishers are reporting high success on harvesting sockeye.

Given that about 85% of the Chinook run is now past Bethel (area with the most harvest), management discussions are including more about chum and abundant sockeye. Again, to allow targeting of sockeye salmon before the run is past, and with harvest surveys indicating a drop in effort, a set net opportunity for July 7 (24 hours) and a drift and set net for July 11 (6 hour) has been announced.

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

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

Escapement Projects:

Escapement projects in southern Norton Sound have become operational with more projects setting up in northern Norton Sound in the coming week, Escapement information will be provided below under each individual project as it becomes available.

Federal Regulation:

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. The BLM field manager is authorized to open the closed area to Federally qualified subsistence users or to all users when run strength warrants.

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 closed 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.

Shaktoolik (5) and Unalakleet (6) Subdistricts

Subsistence Fishing:

The waters of Shaktoolik and Unalakleet (Subdistricts 5 and 6) remain closed to subsistence fishing in marine and fresh waters in order to provide for conservation of king salmon returning to those subdistricts. ADF&G plans to continue offering weekly subsistence opportunity in the marine waters of the Unalakleet and Shaktoolik Subdistricts. with the third 24-hour period opening on July 8 with mesh size restricted to 6-inches or less The department will relax restrictions if in season projections point to king salmon escapement objectives. The department will also relax restrictions in July after the king salmon have migrated through the area. Additionally, beach seining in the marine waters of the subdistrict will be permitted in July; however. Any king salmon must be immediately released unharmed. The marine waters of Shaktoolik and Unalakleet (Subdistricts 5 and 6) opened for a 24-hr period from 6:00 p.m. Saturday, July 1, through 6:00 p.m. Sunday, July 2, with gillnet mesh size restricted to 6 inches or less. A third subsistence opportunity opened for a 24-hr period from 9:00 p.m. Saturday, July 1, through 6:00 p.m. Sunday, July 2, with gillnet mesh size restricted to 6 inches or less. Dip nets and cast nets may be used in the North River, downstream of the North River, and Unalakleet River confluence; however, any king salmon caught must be immediately returned to the water unharmed. Set gillnets with a mesh size of 4-inches or less may be used in the Unalakleet River upstream from its confluence with the North River.

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.

Commercial Fishing:

Commercial salmon fishing opened for 10 hours on July 7 from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. with nets restricted to 4 1/2 inches or less.

Unalakleet River Floating Weir - No escapement goals yet established. A cooperative project of Fish & Game, Native Village of Unalakleet, BLM and NSEDC; major funding provided by USFWS, Office of Subsistence Management. The weir was fish tight on July 1. The Cumulative counts are 3 kings, 2 sockeyes and 10 pinks and 10 chums. The passage rate are currently slow but should pick up in the coming week.

North River Tower Camp J. B. - Escapement goals: king 1,200 to 2,600, chum no goal established, pink 25,000, silver 550-1,100 (aerial survey goal), A NSEDC project. The tower has been operational since June 24 but has yet to pass any salmon.

Shaktoolik Tower – No escapement goals yet established, A NSEDC project. The tower has been operational since June 26. It has an estimated passage of 550 kings, 850 chums, 3 sockeyes and 850 pinks. Both king and chum salmon are currently tracking below average.

NORTON Bay Subdistrict (4)

Subsistence Fishing:

There are currently no restrictions to Subsistence fishing.

Commercial Fishing:

The Subdistrict opened to commercial fishing for 10 hours on July 7 from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. with nets restricted to 4 1/2 inches or less.

Inglutalik River Tower - no escapement goals yet established. A NSEDC project. The project became operational on June 28. Estimated passages are 81 kings, 2,304 chums and 72 pinks.

Ungalik River Tower - no escapement goals established yet. A NSEDC project.

The tower became operational on June 28. Estimated passage was 45 kings, 402 chums and 174 pinks.

Elim Subdistrict (3)

The Subdistrict outlook for chum salmon in the northern sections of Norton Sound is expected to be similar to last year and for a harvestable surplus of chum salmon necessary for directed commercial fishing.

Subsistence Fishing:

Subsistence fishing is allowed 7 days per week.

Commercial Fishing:

Commercial salmon gillnet fishing opened for 24 hours from 6 p.m. on Wednesday, June 28, until 6:00 p.m. Thursday, June 29. This commercial fishing period was a directed chum salmon commercial period with gillnet mesh size restricted to 6 inches or smaller. The commercial harvest for 6 fishermen was 399 chum, 7 sockeye, and 4 pink salmon.

Another 24-hour commercial schedule has been announced from 6:00 p.m. July 5 to 6:00 p.m. July 6 restricted to 6 inches or less mesh size.

Golovin Subdistrict (2)

Subsistence Fishing:

Subsistence fishing is allowed 7 days per week.

Commercial Fishing

Last week's commercial salmon gillnet fishing period resulted in 5 fishermen landing 2,463 chums, and 1 sockeye. Catch per unit of effort was good for this opening and was almost twice the historical average for this time period. This commercial fishing period was a directed chum salmon commercial period with gillnet mesh size restricted to 6 inches or smaller.

Another 24-hour commercial salmon fishing period is scheduled from 6 p.m. July 5 through 6:00 p.m. on July 6 with a mesh size of 6 inches or less.

Nome Subdistrict (1)

Subsistence Fishing:

The Nome Subdistrict remains on a subsistence fishing schedule in marine waters west of Cape Nome and in all fresh waters of the Nome Subdistrict from 6:00 p.m. Wednesdays till 6:00 p.m. Mondays. Marine waters of the Nome Subdistrict east of Cape Nome remain open 7 days per week.

Effective June 15, beach seines, dip nets, and cast net could be used for salmon and will be open in all subsistence areas of the Nome Subdistrict whenever subsistence gillnet fishing is open. Unless closed by emergency order, beach seining will remain open during gillnet fishing periods through August 15.

Commercial Fishing

Last week's commercial salmon 24-hour fishing period resulted in 3 fishermen harvesting 520 chum and 6 sockeye salmon.

Eldorado River Weir -escapement goals-chum 4,400-14,200. A NSEDC project. The weir was fish tight the evening of June 30 and has passed 41 chum salmon.

Port Clarence District

Subsistence Fishing:

The Pilgrim River will remain closed to subsistence net fishing, Escapement of sockeye salmon to the Pilgrim River has been week in recent years and has not met escapement goals. Restrictions may be relaxed if inseason assessment indicates there is a surplus to escapement needs. The entire Pilgrim River and its tributaries as well as the lower Kuzitrin River 300 yards upstream from its mouth remain closed to all net fishing. Subsistence net fishing remains open 7 days per week outside of the Pilgrim River closed area.

Commercial Fishing:

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.

Kotzebue District

Subsistence Fishing:

No changes to existing subsistence fishing are anticipated.

Commercial Fishing:

Commercial salmon fishing will be open for 8 hours daily from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m. Monday, July 10, through Friday, July 14, in the Kotzebue Sound District. In Subdistrict 1 of the Kotzebue District, marine waters adjacent to the end of the runway from the Weather Service Dome south of the main runway to the NANA building north of the main runway and extending one mile offshore into Kotzebue Sound perpendicular to the

beach will be closed to both subsistence and commercial fishing in order to avoid birds being attracted to fishing nets near the end of the airport runway and becoming a safety hazard. Two buyers are registered to purchase chum salmon in Kotzebue this season. The 2023 Kotzebue commercial harvest forecast is 300,000 to 400,000 chum salmon fish.

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