

FISHERIES UPDATE FOR THE WEEK OF JULY 12-18, 2022. Report #8
Compiled by George Pappas - (907) 317-2165, George_Pappas@fws.gov Office of
Subsistence Management, USFWS.

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

SOUTHEAST ALASKA

Sitka and Hoonah Area – Forest Service, Tongass National Forest
Jake Musslewhite, 907-789-6256 jacob.g.musslewhite@usda.gov

July 18, 2022

Redoubt Lake – The Redoubt Lake weir was installed on June 15, and is operated by the USFS. Sockeye returns to Redoubt have been strong this year, with 31,837 Sockeye counted through the weir as of July 17. The escapement goal of 7,000 – 25,000 fish has already been exceeded, and harvest limits have been liberalized to a household possession limit of 25 fish and an annual limit of 100 fish. Commercial purse seine openings have also been held targeting Redoubt Lake Sockeye.

Falls Lake – The Falls Lake weir project was operated for the 21st consecutive year in 2021. The project monitors escapement and terminal harvest of Sockeye Salmon returning to Falls Lake each year. In 2021, an estimated 1,189 Sockeye escaped to the lake, while 315 were harvested in terminal subsistence and sport fisheries (Figure 1). The escapement and harvest were lower than in recent years. However, spawn-recruit analyses indicate that maximum recruitment of Falls Lake Sockeye Salmon occurs at lower escapements – around 2,000 fish. So, the low escapements seen in 2020 and 2021 may still provide for an adequate number of returning adults in several years.

The Falls Lake project was not funded for operation in 2022.

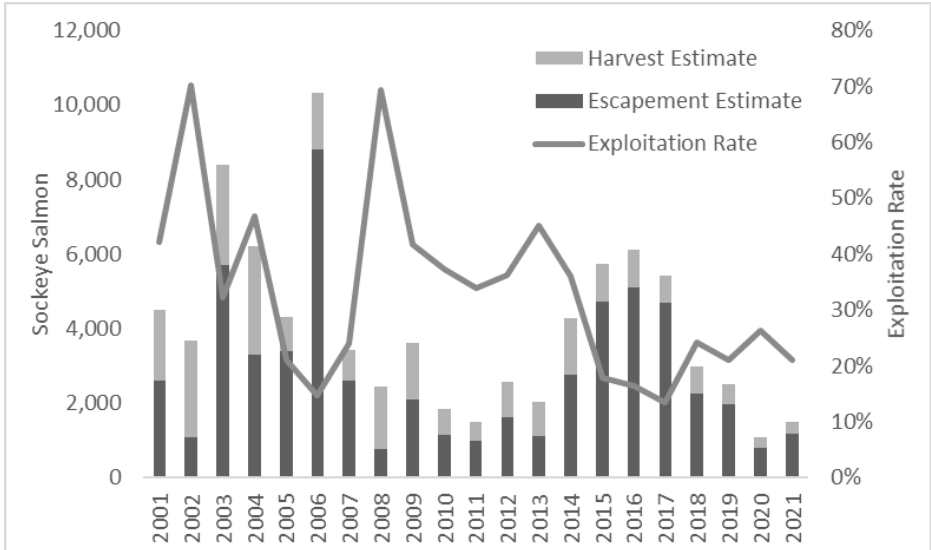


Figure 1. Escapement estimate and onsite harvest estimate for Falls Lake Sockeye Salmon, 2001-2021.

Petersburg and Wrangell Area –Andrew Sanders, Forest Service, Tongass National Forest

Andrew Sanders, (907)772-3871 andrew.sanders@usda.gov

The pre-season terminal run forecast for large Chinook Salmon in the Stikine River is 7,400 fish. This forecast is below the goal range of 14,000 to 28,000 fish. 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 for Chinook Salmon are closed in district 8.

The 2022 Stikine River pre-season Sockeye Salmon forecast is 63,000 fish, with 42,00 Tahltan and 21,000 Mainstem fish. The escapement objective for Tahltan bound Sockeye Salmon is 18,000 to 30,000, and 20,000 to 40,000 for Mainstem fish. The 2022 forecast for Tahltan is expected to meet the escapement objective with a sufficient surplus for allowable harvest. The forecast for the mainstem is not expected to exceed the escapement goal and may result in a season closure.

The 2022 Federal Stikine River Sockeye Salmon subsistence fishery began June 21, and ends July 31. High water levels have reduced participation. A total of 89 permits have been issued for the Stikine fishery, and total harvest is estimated at 658 Sockeye Salmon so far this season.

Juneau and Yakutat – Forest Service, Tongass National Forest
Jake Musslewhite, 907-789-6256 jacob.g.musslewhite@usda.gov

July 18, 2022

Sockeye Salmon - Sockeye Salmon returns in the area appear to be reasonably strong based on anecdotal reports, test fishery catches and commercial harvest data. Sockeye catches in the Hawk Inlet test fishery have been above the ten-year average, suggesting decent returns to northern Southeast. Reports from the field are encouraged and appreciated.

Sitkoh Lake – The Sitkoh Lake weir was installed on July 15 (Figure 1). The Sitkoh Lake weir is a cooperative project between the Forest Service and the Angoon Community Association, and monitors Sockeye Salmon escapement to the lake using a remotely monitored video weir. In 2021, we counted a total of 5,303 Sockeye Salmon through the weir. This was an improvement from the poor escapements of 2017-2019, but less than the 8,000-12,000 fish seen in previous years (Figure 2). Returns are likely to be on the low side, based on the poor escapements in parent years.



Figure 2. Matt Swifi (left, in boat) and Taylor Cunningham installing the Sitkoh Lake weir, July 14, 2022.

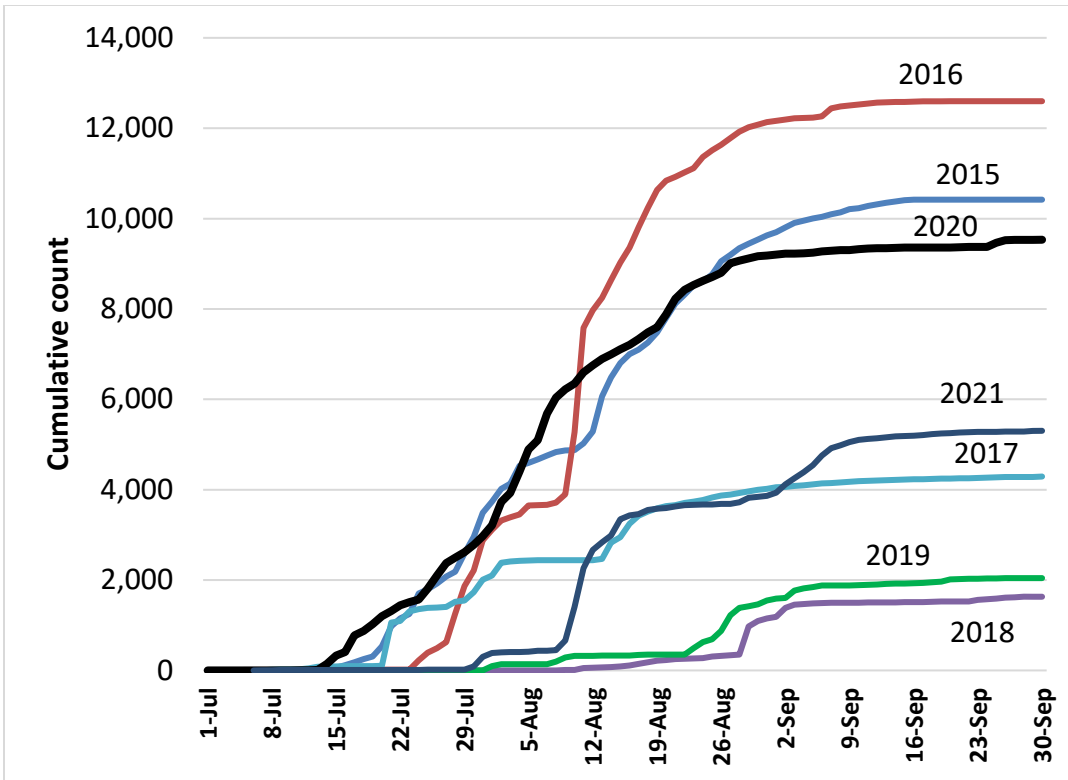


Figure 3. Estimated cumulative escapement of Sockeye Salmon into Sitkoh Lake through video weirs, 2015 to 2021.

Neva Lake – The Neva Lake weir was installed on June 17, 2022. The Neva Lake weir is a cooperative project operated by the Forest Service and the Hoonah Indian Association, and uses a video weir to count Sockeye Salmon entering Neva Lake, near the community of Excursion Inlet. To date, 302 Sockeye have been counted through the weir, which is about on pace for a total escapement of 4-5,000 fish, though it’s too early to tell with much precision. Live video feed and clips from the Neva Lake weir can be found on the web at <http://nevalake.ddns.net:81> .

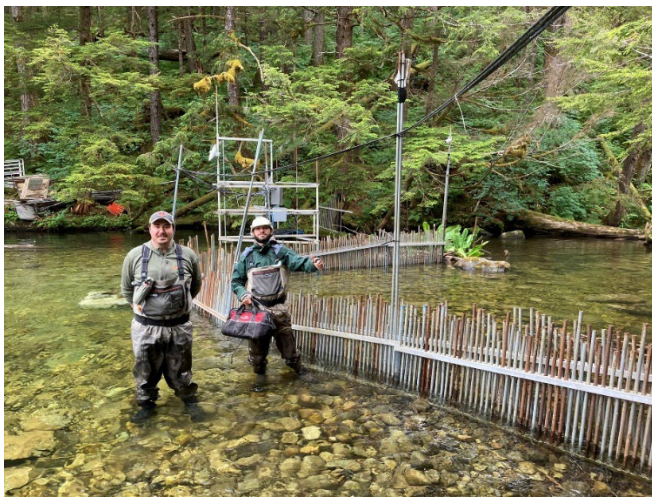


Figure 4. Taylor Cunningham (left) and Elijah Blumenkranz in front of the newly installed Neva Lake weir, June 18, 2022.



Figure 5. Video capture of a Sockeye Salmon passing through the Neva Lake weir.

Yakutat- The Situk continues to have a strong sockeye return this year, with a total of over 66,000 fish having passed through as of July 17. The first Chinook salmon passed through the weir on June 16, and nearly 800 have been counted through July 17.

The preseason forecast for Situk River Chinook Salmon is 1,600 large fish, and the escapement goal range is 450 – 1,050 fish. In order to ensure that the escapement goal is met, subsistence and commercial fisheries on the mouth of the Situk have been closed until further notice (Figure 3). Escapement of Chinook Salmon will be monitored at the Situk weir, and fisheries may reopen if adequate escapement is seen through the weir.

Commercial fisheries in the Yakutat area have begun, with openings on the Alsek River, Yakutat Bay, and the Dangerous River beginning on June 12. Release of Chinook is requested on the Alsek River.



Figure 6. Situk-Ahrnklin Inlet waters closed to commercial and subsistence fishing in 2022.

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

USFS Weekly Summary Author position vacant - TBA. No reports expected this season or until alternate staffing arrangements are made.

Southeast Alaska Web Links

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

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

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

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

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

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

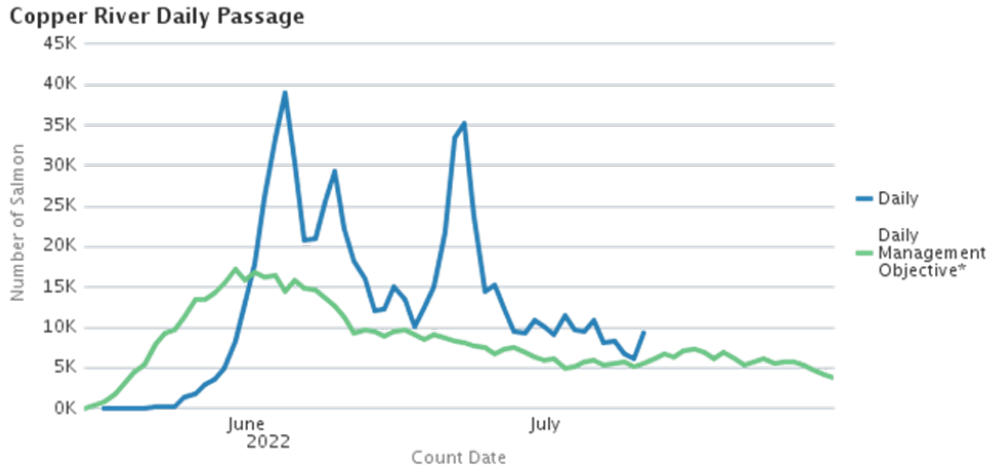
SOUTHCENTRAL ALASKA

PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND – COPPER RIVER

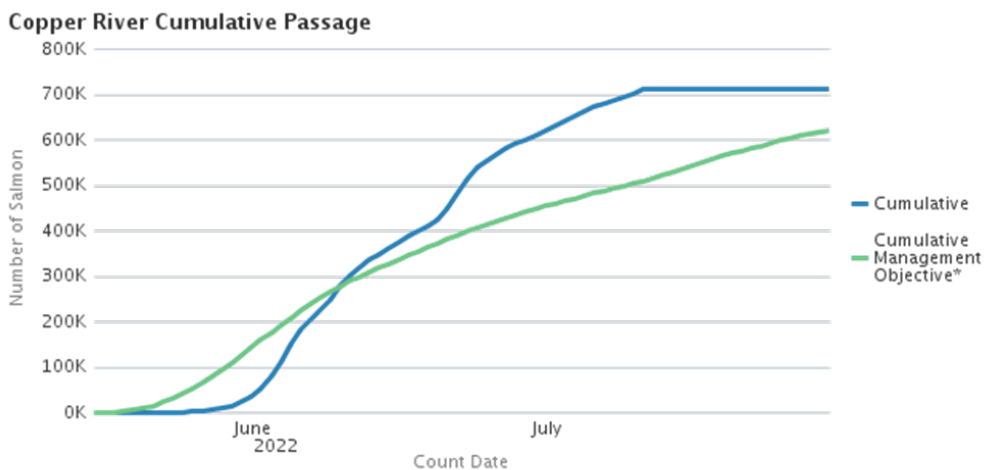
Copper River, 7/17/2022 Update – Dave Sarafin, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve (WRST), (907) 822-7281, dave_sarafin@nps.gov

The total Copper River District commercial harvest reported for the season through July 16 is 574,094 Sockeye Salmon, 11,609 Chinook Salmon, 300 Coho Salmon, 55,657 Pink Salmon, and 13,046 Chum Salmon.

The ADFG sonar at Miles Lake (located just downstream of the Million Dollar Bridge in the Copper River) began limited operation of the sonar on May 17 and became fully operational on May 25. As of July 16, there have been 746,000 salmon estimated migrating upstream for the season. A daily estimate of 5,889 salmon migrated by the sonar on July 16.



Graph of Copper River Salmon Daily Passage at Miles Lake Sonar through July 16 2022



Graph of Copper River Salmon Cumulative Passage at Miles Lake Sonar through July 16, 2022

Source:

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

Performance in the commercial fishery and in river sonar salmon passage estimates provide the primary assessments of the Sockeye Salmon return to the Copper River. Although the initial two commercial fishing periods resulted in relatively low harvest, subsequent periods resulted in significant increases in Sockeye Salmon harvest. As of July 16, the cumulative sonar estimate for the season is now 35% above the management objective of 552,201 for this date of the season.

As with Sockeye Salmon, fisheries managers are also monitoring Chinook Salmon run strength; primary indicators are commercial harvest rates and data from the Chinook Salmon in river abundance project operated by the Native Village of Eyak (NVE).

Additional insight is gained from the recent application of updated technology at the Miles Lake sonar site to provide species apportionment data. Although early season assessments indicated a potentially weak run of Chinook Salmon, recent assessments by the State indicate that the inriver return now appears significantly stronger and at a level that should meet the lower bound of the sustainable escapement goal, while continuing to provide harvest opportunities.

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 is scheduled to be open intermittently during the week of July 18 through 24.

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. Through the Office of Subsistence Management (OSM) Federal subsistence permit website, 168 Chitina Subdistrict permits, 269 Glennallen Subdistrict permits, and 2 Batzulnetas permits have been issued to date.

The Federal subsistence fishery in the Lower Copper River near Cordova opened on June 1. Permits are available at the Cordova Ranger Station (Chugach National Forest). 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. Harvest reports are being directed to a drop box at the Cordova Ranger Station. As of July 10, there have been 66 permits issued with 104 Sockeye Salmon and 3 Chinook Salmon reported in harvest. There has been no harvest reported since June 28.

With funding through the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program (FRMP), WRST is now operating the Tanada Creek salmon weir located at Batzulnetas. This is the first year of operation since the 2018 season. Weir installation was completed on June 24. The first salmon was documented passing the weir on June 28. As of July 17, there have been 5,026 Sockeye Salmon and 5 Chinook Salmon recorded in passage for the season.



Tanada Creek Salmon Weir and Crew, 2022

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>

**PWS and Copper River Delta – Stormy Haight, Chugach National Forest, Cordova.
18 July 2022**

Thirty-five Federal Subsistence fishing permits have been issued for freshwaters within the Chugach National Forest portion of the Prince William Sound area (FFPW01) 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. Seventy-four permits were issued in 2021 and 28 were fished. Reported harvest was 459 Coho Salmon, 19 Sockeye Salmon and 4 Cutthroat Trout.

The new dip net fishery in the Lower Copper River Area (FFPW05) began on June 1, 2022. Sixty-six permits have been issued so far. Most effort and harvest has taken place at 36-Mile of the Copper River Highway. Harvest must be reported with 48 hours, no reported harvest since June 28th. Season total harvest to-date of 104 Sockeye and 3 King Salmon.

COOK INLET AREA – Kenneth Gates, Senior Fish Biologist, Kenai Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office

The 2022 Cook Inlet Federal subsistence fishing is underway. Federal fisheries on Kenai and Kasilof rivers began 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 at Sockeye Salmon in the Upper Kenai and Russian Rivers which opened June 11.

Four Hundred and two permits have been issued to residents of Cooper Landing, Hope, and Ninilchik. Permit types include a general fishing, household, designated fisher, and community gillnet permits. To date, 1,649 Sockeye Salmon have been harvested in all fisheries between the Kasilof and Kenai rivers: 973 by gillnet in the Kasilof, six by dipnet in the Kasilof River, and 670 by dipnet at the Russian River Falls.

No special actions have been issued for Cook Inlet Federal fisheries. However, escapement is extremely poor for Chinook Salmon returning to upper Cook Inlet requiring State fisheries managers to close all saltwater fisheries north of Bluff Point targeting Chinook Salmon including Kenai and Kasilof in-river fisheries. The in-season passage of 2,051 large early-run Chinook Salmon in the lower Kenai River is well below the minimum OEG of 3,900 fish. The late-run of Chinook Salmon to the Kenai River is expected to track similar to the early-run. The State of Alaska deemed it necessary to implement further conservation measures for Chinook Salmon returning to the Kenai River thereby closing the in-river sport fishery and east-side commercial set-gillnet fishery July 17, 2022 for the remainder of the season. We will be closely monitoring Federal harvest of Chinook Salmon the Kenai River.

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

The Sockeye Salmon runs within the Kodiak Management Area is considered to medium in strength. The southern end of Kodiak Island has recorded strong Sockeye Salmon escapements. The Karluk River early Sockeye Salmon escapement has exceeded its lower escapement goal with a cumulative count to date (July 13, 2022) of 172,465 fish. The Ayakulik River Sockeye Salmon escapement is much stronger with a cumulative count to date of 247,593 fish. Upper Station Sockeye Salmon escapement is strong also, with a cumulative count to date of 81,432 fish. The end of the early run occurs on July 15 and management practices will switch to late run on July 16, 2022.

Litnik and Buskin River escapements were slow but have reached their respective escapement goals. Reports from local subsistence users shows that the catch per unit effort is very low. Many subsistence users have continued to travel to other systems within the area of Kodiak to meet their needs, i.e., Port Lions and Pasagshak.

The Chinook Salmon runs on the Karluk and Ayakulik Rivers are failing to meet their respective escapement goals, with only 2,220 Chinook Salmon being recorded on the Karluk River and 2,751 Chinook Salmon being recorded on the Ayakulik River.

The Akalura video project continues to collect data via still photos and video. Review of photos for the month of June did not have any Sockeye Salmon moving into the system. It is unknown why no fish have been recorded migrating into the Akalura system as Dog Salmon weir recorded 51,302 fish and Upper Station recorded 70,810 fish. Kodiak staff are working on getting the photos reviewed to date as soon as possible.

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

FISHERIES UPDATE FOR THE WEEK OF JULY 18, 2022.

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 16:

Alagnak = 1,307,340
 Egegik = 1,696,182
 Igushik = 237,324
 Kvichak = 3,721,686
 Naknek = 1,816,698
 Nushagak = 3,375,390; Chinook = 43,607
 Togiak = 35,106
 Ugashik = 1,286,376
 Wood River = 3,616,428

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 17 is 531,469 Sockeye Salmon. Early run Sockeye Salmon account for 405,522 fish and late run Sockeye Salmon account for 125,947 fish. The interim escapement objective for July 20 is around 350,000 – 440,000 early run fish and 70,000 – 140,000 late run fish.

Approximately 428 Chinook Salmon have been counted at the ADFG weir as of July 17. Based on historical run timing, approximately 50% of the escapement has occurred by July 15, and the current projected total escapement is below the lower end of the escapement goal of 1,300 fish. As such an Emergency Special Action (8-KS-01-22) was issued on July 13 through August 30, closing fishing for Chinook Salmon in the Federal public waters of the Chignik River drainage above the weir due to concerns about the viability of the population. The ADFG implemented restrictions to sport and subsistence fisheries concurrently, State and Federal restrictions were effective July 13.

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:

Preseason forecasts are made only for the Nelson River and late-run (post July 31) Bear Lake stocks.

Current counts for Sockeye Salmon at installed escapement projects for July 13:

Nelson = 40,214; Chinook = 1,546
 Bear = 247,231
 Ilnik = 91,866; Chinook = 8
 Orzinski = 9,839
 Sandy = 30,347
 McLees = 5,121

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 12-July 18, 2022

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

Assessment Information

As of July 17 at Pilot station sonar, approximately 43,000 Chinook Salmon have passed the sonar compared to a historical average for this time of about 149,000 fish (for late runs). Eagle Sonar passage is low at 1, 476 fish compared to a historical average of approximately 10,500 fish for this date. So far this is the lowest Chinook run on record for the Yukon River. Approximately 407,000 summer Chum Salmon passed the sonar compared to a historical median for this time of about 1.6 million (for late runs), the current run size appears to be the second lowest on record. As of July 18, Pilot Station Sonar counts transition to Fall chum salmon. Based on the summer chum run size and the relationship between summer and fall chum abundance, the projected fall chum run is unlikely to be large enough to meet the minimum escapement goal of 300,000 fish needed to allow harvest.

Coho salmon are projected to be below average, but fishing will be allowed for this species, with live-release gear such as dip nets, hook and line, and manned fish wheels.

Assessment and management updates will be given on the **YR DFA weekly teleconferences each Tuesday at 1:00 pm at the following number: 1-800-315-6338, Passcode: 98566#**. To hear the fishing schedule and fish counts please call the toll-free Fishing Schedule and Fish Counts hotline: 866-479-7387.

Management Actions

Under the Delegated letter of Authority, and in consultation with Regional Advisory Council chairs and Office of Subsistence management staff, the Federal In-season Manager began issuing emergency special actions to close salmon fishing in each district, starting on June 2, and moving the closures upriver based on salmon migration timing.

As we transition to management for fall season (fall chum and coho salmon), emergency special actions are being announced to keep fishing closed for fall chum, and to allow harvest of coho salmon for federally qualified subsistence users in Federal public waters. Chinook and summer chum continue to pass through the river, so closures to summer chum and Chinook salmon fishing continue to be in place throughout the drainage.

Fishing for non-salmon species with 4-inch or smaller mesh gillnets is allowed under State and Federal regulations during salmon fishing closures; however, net length is restricted to a maximum of 60 feet. If a Chinook or Chum salmon is caught in 4-inch mesh gillnets, it should be released alive if possible, or if dead, may be kept. If fishermen are encountering salmon in a particular area, they should move their net and avoid areas where salmon are running. Other non-salmon gear types, including manned fish wheels, dip net, hook and line, longline, jigging gear, hand line, beach seine, fyke net, spear, or lead may be used but all Chinook and summer and fall Chum salmon caught must be released alive from these gears. Coho salmon, Pink Salmon or Sockeye Salmon may be retained in these gears if caught.

Subsistence salmon fishing has been closed in Federal public waters by Emergency Special Action in the following Districts and Subdistricts:

Summer Season:

- Coastal District and District 1, June 2 ([2-KS-01-22](#))
- District 2, June 4 ([2-KS-01-22](#))
- District 3, June 7 ([2-KS-02-22](#))
- Subdistrict 4-A Lower, June 12 ([2-KS-03-22](#))
- Subdistrict 4-A Upper, June 15 ([2-KS-03-22](#))
- Subdistricts 4-B/C, June 17 ([2-KS-04-22](#))
- Innoko River, June 17 ([2-KS-05-22](#))
- Subdistricts 5-A/B/C, June 21 ([2-KS-06-22](#))
- Koyukuk River, June 25 ([2-KS-07-22](#))
- Subdistrict 5-D Lower, June 25 ([2-KS-08-22](#))
- Subdistrict 5-D Middle, June 28 ([2-KS-08-22](#))
- Subdistrict 5-D Upper, June 30 ([2-KS-08-22](#))
- Subdistrict 6A, June 23 ([2-KS-09-22](#))
- Upper Tanana River June 28 ([2-KS-09-22](#))

Fall Season:

- Coastal District and District 1, July 16 ([2-FC-01-22](#))
- District 2, July 19 ([2-FC-01-22](#))
- District 3, July 21 ([2-FC-01-22](#))

These management actions were taken in consultation with Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G). State-managed waters in these areas have been closed concurrently by ADF&G.

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/

Recent Fishery special actions are posted here:

[Fisheries Special Actions | U.S. Department of the Interior \(doi.gov\)](#)

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

For Federal News Releases and Emergency Special actions, like:

www.facebook.com/subsistencealaska.

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

Pursuant to authority delegated by the Federal Subsistence Board, the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge Manager, as In-Season Manager, hereby announces an additional fishing opportunity for Federally qualified subsistence users. This additional opening reflects revisions to Emergency Special Action (ESA) 3-KS-01-22, issued May 02, 2022, which closed certain waters within and adjacent to the exterior boundaries of the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge (YDNWR) to the harvest of salmon and certain fishing methods in order to ensure the continued viability of, and subsistence use of Chinook and Chum Salmon. ESA 3-KS-02-22 announced on June 18, 2022, allowed for an additional drift net opportunity, and opened gillnet fishing upstream of Kalskag Bluffs. ESA 3-KS-03-22 announced on June 27th 2022 provided for set net opportunities. Finally, ESA 3-KS-04-22 opened the Aniak Closed Area (Aniak Box) to rod and reel fishing for Chinook Salmon, while leaving that area closed to all other means and methods. Since that time, the In-Season manager has continued to review data and information reported by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) and other parties and has engaged in numerous discussions with stakeholders concerning the prospect of providing additional harvest opportunities.

The data indicates that this season's Chinook Salmon run is similar to the 2021 run. However, the data also indicates, and ADF&G and the Kuskokwim Inter-Tribal Fish Commission agree, that limited re-openings can be provided without jeopardizing the viability of future Chinook salmon runs. At this point there are limited concerns over Chinook due to the estimated 92% run passage past Bethel and Sonar counts showing high escapement estimates. However, the concern for Chum Salmon has now reached its peak and is guiding these decisions and harvest opportunities.

Chum Salmon numbers are critically low in the Kuskokwim River, with numbers tracking similarly to 2020 (a very low year). The YDNWR and Kuskokwim River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission continue to support a conservative approach. An analysis of Bethel Sonar (operated by ADF&G) indicates that about 80% of the salmon composition in the lower Kuskokwim are Sockeye Salmon as of July 4th, 2022. This high number of Sockeye Salmon are the target of these announced opportunities. The harvest is further justified by a reduction in fishing pressure; relative to earlier in the salmon season (we estimate that there will be 150 drift nets and 40 set nets observed) and the closure periods (5-6 days per week) are far greater than the harvest periods (1 or 2 days of harvest each week). This conservation approach is to allow for higher levels of Chum Salmon escapement.

The subsections below describe these additional openings and reiterate certain key closures and restrictions instituted by 3-KS-01-22 that remain in effect.

Federally Qualified Subsistence Fishing Opportunities:

- **July 16, 2022 from 6:00 am to 10:00 pm**

Set gillnets are restricted to 6-inch or less mesh, may not exceed 75 feet in length and 45 meshes in depth. Set gillnets may not be operated more than 100 feet from the ordinary high-water mark, (the bank/shoreline where vegetation is growing), must be attached to the bank, and substantially fished perpendicular to shore.

Test Fisheries and Harvest Estimate:

As of July 17, 2022 the CPUE for Chinook at the Bethel test fish is at 482. The 2021 and 2020 Chinook CPUE for this day were at 527 and 474, respectively.

Cumulative harvest of Chinook salmon on the Kuskokwim as of 7/03 is currently at 28,820.

As of July 17, 2022 the CPUE for Chum at the Bethel test fish is at 1,153. The 2021 and 2020 Chinook CPUE for this day were at 256 and 1,131, respectively.

As of July 17, 2022 the CPUE for Sockeye at the Bethel test fish is at 1,289. The 2021 and 2020 Chinook CPUE for this day were at 1,585 and 949, respectively.

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/>

FISHERIES UPDATE FOR THE WEEK OF JULY 10 - JULY 16, 2022, REPORT #8

Northwest Alaska – Ken Adkisson, National Park Service, Nome.

(907) 443-6104 Ken_Adkisson@nps.gov

Norton Sound District

Sport Fishing:

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game closed fresh waters from Bald Head to Point Romanof to sport fishing for king salmon effective 12:01 a.m. June 23, 2022. This closure includes, but is not limited to, the Unalakleet, Shaktoolik, Koyuk, Ungalik, Inglutalik, and Golovin River drainages. In addition, only one unbaited, single-hook,

artificial lure may be used in these drainages. These temporary regulations will remain in effect through August 15, 2022, or until there are indications of a harvestable surplus above escapement objectives. Escapements are indexed by a counting tower on the North River, a tributary of the Unalakleet River, and a floating weir which is located on the mainstem Unalakleet River.

St. Michael and Stebbins

Subsistence Fishing:

Subsistence fishing is open 7 days per week in southern Norton Sound from Pt. Romanof to Black Point. Regulation does allow for the restriction of gillnet mesh size in the subsistence fisheries throughout Norton Sound if it is necessary to conserve Chinook salmon.

Southern Norton Sound: Subdistrict (6) Unalakleet and Subdistrict (5) Shaktoolik

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.

Commercial Fishing:

Subdistricts 5 and 6 opened for 8 hours from 9:00 a.m. until 5 p.m. Wednesday, July 13. This commercial fishing period was a pink salmon directed commercial period with gillnets restricted to 4 ½ inches, or smaller, mesh size and 100 fathoms of net in aggregate length. King salmon caught during the directed pink salmon fishery in Subdistricts 5 and 6 could be retained for personal use but could not be sold. Any king salmon retained for personal use by commercial fishermen must be recorded on the fish ticket.

Subdistricts 5 and 6 reopened for a second commercial fishing period for 12 hours from 7:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. Friday, July 15. This commercial fishing period was a pink salmon directed commercial period with gillnets restricted to 4 ½ inches, or smaller, mesh size and 100 fathoms of net in aggregate length. King salmon caught during the directed pink salmon fishery in Subdistricts 5 and 6 could be retained for personal use but could not be sold. Any king salmon retained for personal use by commercial fishermen must be recorded on the fish ticket.

Escapements for chum salmon in the Niukluk and Kwiniuk Rivers are projected to attain the escapement objectives for those systems at this time. Chum salmon escapement at projects in Subdistrict 4 indicate that chum salmon escapement is near historical escapements when commercial fisheries have occurred.

The pink salmon run has been building and is sufficient to allow for pink salmon commercial fishing in Subdistricts 5 and 6 based on the buyer's capacity.

Subsistence Fishing:

Subsistence gillnet fishing is currently closed in Subdistricts 5 and 6. Subsistence fishing in marine waters of Subdistrict 6 (Unalakleet) and marine and fresh waters of Subdistrict 5 (Shaktoolik) opened for one 24-hour period from 8:00 p.m. Monday, July 11, until 8:00 p.m. Tuesday, July 12. Gillnet mesh size is restricted to a maximum of 6-inch stretched mesh. All other subsistence fisheries in Norton Sound remain unchanged by this 24-hour fishing period.

By Board of Fisheries regulation, the King Salmon Management Plan for Subdistricts 5 and 6, the Shaktoolik and Unalakleet Subdistricts, and the Unalakleet River is in effect and from July 1 through August 10 beach seining is allowed 7 days a week unless changed by emergency order. Salmon other than king salmon may be kept when beach seining in Subdistricts 5 and 6. All king salmon caught when beach seining must be returned immediately to water unharmed. Beach seines must have a mesh size of 4 ½ inches or smaller.

Salmon escapements to Subdistricts 5 and 6 have improved and escapement objectives are projected to be met. But given the low abundance in recent years the department is opting for a conservative approach to opening commercial or subsistence fisheries to ensure escapement objectives are achieved. The department thanks NSEDC for operating salmon counting projects for over two decades and aiding with department counting projects in Norton Sound.

Northern Norton Sound: Subdistrict 2 (Golovin), Subdistrict 3 (Elim) and Subdistrict 4 (Norton Bay)

Commercial Fishing:

Commercial salmon gillnet fishing opened for 24 hours in Norton Sound Subdistricts 2, 3, and 4, the Golovin, Elim, and Norton Bay from 6:00 p.m. Monday, July 11, until 6 p.m. on Tuesday, July 12. Nets were restricted to 6-inch stretched mesh, or less, and 100 fathoms in aggregate.

Escapements for chum salmon in the Niukluk and Kwiniuk River are projected to attain the escapement objectives for those systems at this time. Chum salmon escapement at projects in Subdistrict 4 indicate that chum salmon escapement is well ahead of this time last year and near historical escapements when commercial fisheries have occurred. The pink salmon run has been building and is sufficient to allow for pink salmon commercial fishing in most subdistricts based on the buyer's capacity.

A second Commercial salmon gillnet fishing period opened for 48 hours in Norton Sound Subdistricts 2, 3, and 4, the Golovin, Elim, and Norton Bay Subdistricts, from 6:00 p.m. Friday, July 15, until 6 p.m. on Sunday, July 17. Nets will be restricted to 6-inch stretched

mesh, or less, and 100 fathoms in aggregate. Fish retained for personal use must be recorded on a fish ticket.

The pink salmon run has been building and is sufficient to allow for pink salmon commercial fishing in most subdistricts based on the buyer's capacity.

Northern Norton Sound: Subdistricts (4) Norton Bay (3) Elim, (2) Golovin. (1) Nome

Subsistence Fishing:

A subsistence salmon permit is required when subsistence salmon fishing in northern Norton Sound. Permits are required for all marine and fresh waters of Subdistricts 1 through 3 (Nome, Golovin, and Elim), Cape Woolley Subdistrict of the Norton Sound District, and the Port Clarence District. A separate permit for Pilgrim River and Salmon Lake is required when fishing there. Catch limits in effect are listed on the permit for the rivers that have subsistence catch limits.

Rod and reel are legal subsistence fishing gear in northern Norton Sound and a subsistence salmon permit or sport fish license is required when fishing with rod and reel for salmon.

Rod and reel are not legal subsistence fishing gear in southern Norton Sound and a sport fish license is required when fishing with a rod and reel in State of Alaska open waters. However, no subsistence salmon permits are required in Southern Norton Sound waters when fishing with a net including the Norton Bay Subdistrict beginning at Bald Head, between Elim and Koyuk, to the southern Norton Sound District boundary at Point Romanof.

Subdistrict (1) Nome

Subsistence Fishing:

By Alaska Board of Fisheries regulation, on June 15 the summer subsistence salmon gillnet fishing schedule went into effect in the Nome Subdistrict. The marine waters east of Cape Nome are open 7 days per week. All Nome Subdistrict freshwater subsistence areas and the marine waters west of Cape Nome are open to gillnet fishing for five days each week from 6 p.m. Wednesdays until 6 p.m. Mondays. Effective June 15, beach seining for salmon opened 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. Dip nets and cast nets can also be used at any time gillnet fishing is open.

The first-time nets were required to be removed from all fresh-water Nome Subdistrict subsistence areas at midnight on Monday evening, June 14. Likewise, all nets were required to be removed from Nome Subdistrict marine waters west of Cape Nome on Monday evening, June 14, at midnight. Also, effective June 15, all gillnet and beach seine fishing upstream of Boulder Creek on the Sinuk River was closed. This closure is in

effect to protect migrating sockeye salmon that hold in the Sinuk River bridge area before reaching the spawning grounds.

Port Clarence District

Effective Friday, July 8, at 6 p.m. all net fishing closed in the lower Kuzitrin River from 300 yards upstream of the outlet of the Pilgrim River to the Kuzitrin River mouth and in the entire Pilgrim River and its tributaries until further notice.

Sockeye salmon escapement past the Pilgrim River weir for the first week of July is at trailing all years, except for years when the escapement goal was not reached in 20 years of the weir project. The department believes that this year's earlier closure will help enough fish to reach the Salmon Lake spawning grounds. Therefore, if escapement improves to ensure the Pilgrim River weir escapement goal range of 6,800 to 36,000 sockeye salmon will be reached, the department will reopen the subsistence fishery to net fishing.

Kotzebue District

Commercial Fishing:

Commercial salmon fishing was open for 8 hours daily from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. Sunday, July 10 through Friday, July 15 in the Kotzebue Sound District.

The catch for the first week was 10,416 chums by 20 permit holders. The catch was over three times the catch during the first week of fishing last year.

Three buyers are purchasing Kotzebue chum salmon this season and have notified the department they plan to buy starting on Sunday.

The 2022 Kotzebue commercial harvest forecast is 100,000 to 200,000 chum salmon.

Subsistence Fishing:

No subsistence fishing restrictions are expected in 2022.

Kiana Test Fishery:

The department test fish crew in Kiana began fishing on Thursday. The first two days of fishing had chum catches like last year.

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