

FISHERIES UPDATE FOR THE WEEK OF JULY 19-24, 2022. Report #9
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

Position vacant – No reports expected for remainder of season.

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

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

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National Forest

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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.

The 2022 Federal Stikine River Sockeye Salmon subsistence fishery began June 21, and ends July 31. The river level is falling, resulting in better fishing conditions than previous weeks. A total of 97 permits have been issued for the Stikine fishery, and total harvest is estimated at 980 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 25, 2022

Northern Inside Waters – Purse seine and gillnet fisheries are in full swing throughout northern Southeast. After initially dismal indicators of Pink Salmon returns, the humpies appear to be showing up, though still not in huge numbers. Same goes for Chum Salmon returns, which have improved in recent weeks. 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 1. Matt Swift (left, in boat) and Taylor Cunningham installing the Sitkoh Lake weir, July 14, 2022.

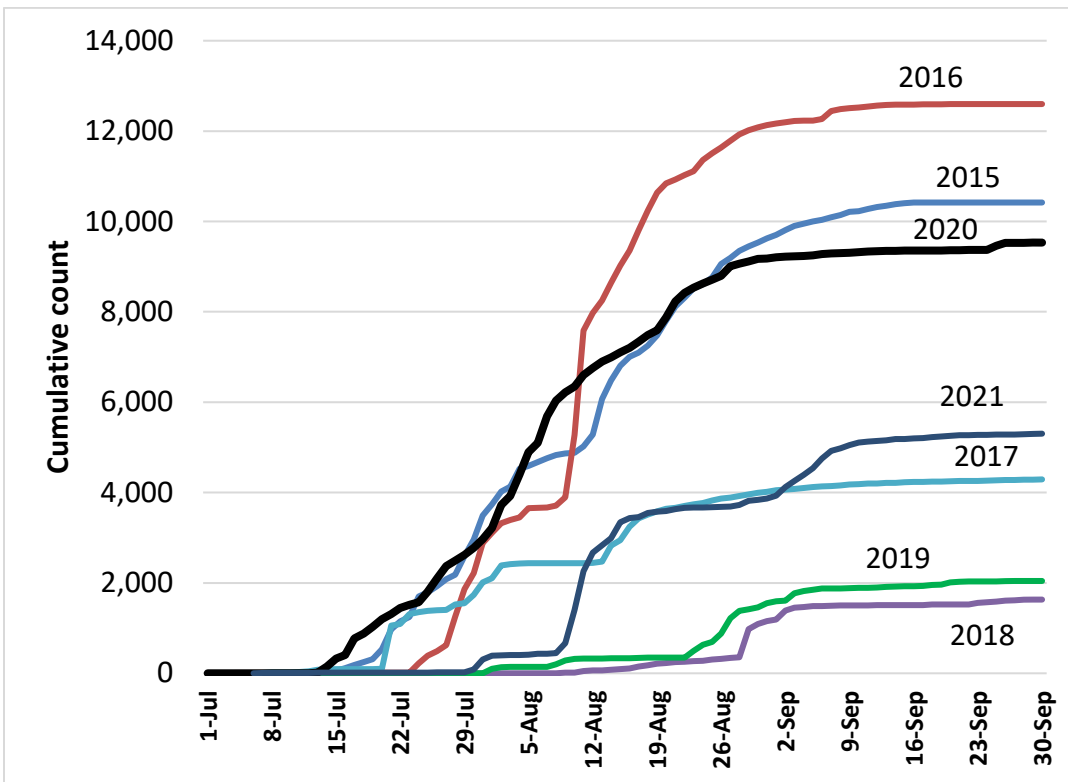


Figure 2. Estimated cumulative escapement of Sockeye Salmon into Sitkoh Lake through video weirs, 2015 to 2021.

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. Over 1,500 Sockeye have been counted through the weir as of July 21, and a steady stream of fish continues to pass through the weir with the recent rain. Live video feed and clips from the Neva Lake weir can be found on the web at <http://nevalake.ddns.net:81> .



Figure 3. Video surveillance capture of the Neva Lake weir, July 25, 2022.



Figure 4. Video capture of a Sockeye Salmon passing through the Neva Lake weir, July 24, 2022.

Yakutat- Commercial fisheries in the Yakutat area continue, with openings throughout the Yakutat area. The Situk continues to have a strong sockeye return this year, with a total of over 69,000 fish having passed through as of July 21. Counts of Chinook have slowed, but nearly 800 have been counted through July 21. Based on weir counts, it appears unlikely that the preseason forecast of 1,600 large fish will be achieved, but the return is within the escapement goal range of 450 – 1,050 large 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.



Figure 5. 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/>

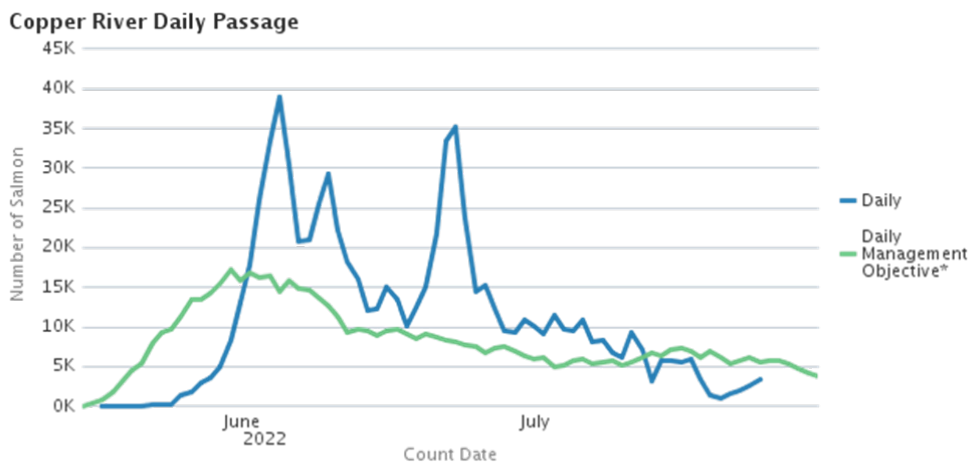
SOUTHCENTRAL ALASKA

PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND – COPPER RIVER

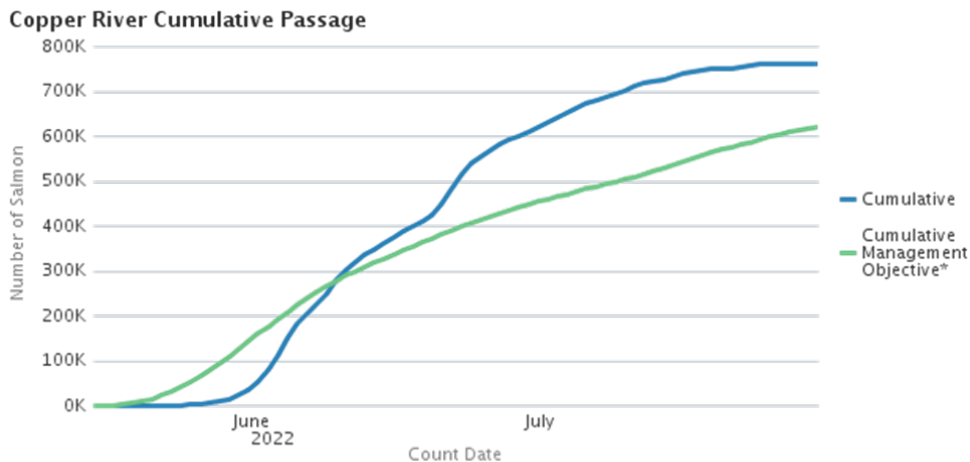
Copper River, 7/17/2022 Update – Dave Sarafin, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve (WRST), (907) 822-7281, dave_sarafin@nps.gov

The total Copper River District commercial harvest reported for the season through July 23 is 583,671 Sockeye Salmon, 11,614 Chinook Salmon, 335 Coho Salmon, 57,525 Pink Salmon, and 13,142 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 23, there have been 761,257 salmon estimated migrating upstream for the season. A daily estimate of 3,331 salmon migrated by the sonar on July 23.



Graph of Copper River Salmon Daily Passage at Miles Lake Sonar through July 23 2022



Graph of Copper River Salmon Cumulative Passage at Miles Lake Sonar through July 23, 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 23, the cumulative sonar estimate for the season is now 28% above the management objective of 594,095 for this date of the season.

As with Sockeye Salmon, fisheries managers are also monitoring Chinook Salmon run strength; the primary assessment of this run comes from the Chinook Salmon in river abundance project operated by the Native Village of Eyak (NVE). This assessment indicates that the inriver return appears to be 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 closed July 25 through 27, then to be open July 28 through 31.

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, 175 Chitina Subdistrict permits, 279 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 24, there have been 69 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 24, there have been 8,136 Sockeye Salmon and 7 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.
25 July 2022**

Thirty-eight 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-nine 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.

on

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, 2,815 Sockeye Salmon have been harvested in all fisheries between the Kasilof and Kenai rivers: 973 by gillnet in the Kasilof River, 1,087 by gillnet in the Kenai River, 38 by dipnet in the Kasilof River, and 717 by dipnet at the Russian River Falls.

No special actions have been issued for Cook Inlet Federal fisheries. However, escapement remains poor for Chinook Salmon returning to upper Cook Inlet requiring State fisheries managers to close all saltwater sport fisheries north of Bluff Point targeting Chinook Salmon including Kenai and Kasilof in-river fisheries. 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

Subsistence fishing activity has slowed considerably throughout the Kodiak Management Area over the past couple of weeks. Buskin River sockeye salmon escapement has slowed over the last week with an average weekly salmon passage of 34 fish, which is down from 69 the week before. There has not been any subsistence fishing activity at the mouth of the River. The Litnik sockeye salmon escapement has slowed a little bit over the past week with average weekly count of 290 fish. This number is down from the week before when the average weekly count was 349 fish. Reports from local fishermen have shown a small pulse of fish were harvested in the harbor around Ouzinkie.

Management practices have changed from early run to late run for sockeye salmon escapement on Karluk, Ayakulik, and Upper Station systems on July 16. Late run sockeye salmon on Karluk and Ayakulik Rivers are very low when compared to past numbers on this date. There have been commercial openings in this area for the past 3-4 days.

The Chinook Salmon escapement continues to trickle into the Karluk and Ayakulik River drainages, but it is unlikely they will meet their respective lower escapement goals. The Chinook salmon escapement to date for the Karluk River is 2,416 fish and the Ayakulik is 2,812 fish.

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

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

FISHERIES UPDATE FOR THE WEEK OF JULY 25, 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 24:

Alagnak = 1,580,946 (total on 7/21/2022)
 Egegik = 1,784,152 (total on 7/21/2022)
 Igushik = 355,016
 Kvichak = 4,167,456 (total on 7/21/2022)
 Naknek = 1,921,296 (total on 7/21/2022)
 Nushagak = 3,442,683; Chinook = 44,502
 Togiak = 83,790
 Ugashik = 1,360,554 (total on 7/21/2022)
 Wood River = 3,732,708 (total on 7/22/2022)

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 24 is 612,819 Sockeye Salmon. Early run Sockeye Salmon account for 420,899 fish and late run Sockeye Salmon account for 191,920 fish. The interim escapement objective for July 25 is around 350,000 – 448,000 early run fish and 110,000 – 200,000 late run fish.

Approximately 560 Chinook Salmon have been counted at the ADFG weir as of July 24. 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 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 24:

Nelson = 72,338; Chinook = 2,147
 Bear = 339,352
 Inik = 93,959; Chinook = 10 (Weir pulled 7/19/2022)
 Orzinski = 12,937
 Sandy = 42,036 (Weir pulled 7/23/2022)
 McLees = 12,287

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 23 at Pilot station sonar, approximately 44,000 Chinook Salmon have passed the sonar compared to a historical average for this time of about 151,000 fish (for late runs) and the run is considered nearly complete in the lower river. Eagle Sonar passage is exceptionally low at 2,947 fish compared to a historical average of approximately 27,000 fish for this date. So far this is the lowest Chinook run on record for the Yukon River. As of July 18, the final day of assessing summer chum at Pilot Station sonar, approximately 437,000 summer Chum Salmon passed the sonar. This run is well below the bottom end of the drainage-wide escapement goal of 500,000-1.2 million. As of July 23, the cumulative fall Chum salmon passage at Pilot Station sonar is approximately 54,000 which is below the median for this date of approximately 86,000. 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.

In the Lower Yukon Test fish cooperative project, no large groups of fall chum have been seeing moving into the river yet, and no Coho have been caught.

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](#))
- District 4 and the Koyukuk River, July 28 ([2-FC-02-22](#))

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 17 - JULY 23, 2022 REPORT
#9

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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.

Subdistrict 6 (Unalakleet)

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.

Subsistence Fishing:

Subsistence fishing: Beach staving is allowed 7 days a week, but all king salmon must be released in the water immediately unharmed. Subsistence gillnet fishing is closed unless open by emergency order.

Commercial Fishing:

Subdistrict 6 opened for a 12-hour period from 7:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. on Saturday, July 23. This commercial fishing period was a pink salmon directed 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 Subdistrict 6 could be retained for personal use but may not be sold. Any king salmon retained for personal use by commercial fishermen must be recorded on the fish ticket. The pink salmon run is sufficient to allow for pink salmon commercial fishing in Subdistrict 6 based on the buyer's capacity.

The commercial fishing harvest is 73 sockeyes, 1,000 chums and 41,000 pink salmon by 20 permit holders.

Unalakleet River Floating Weir - No escapement goals yet established. A cooperative project of Fish & Game, BLM and NSEDC; major funding provided by USFWS, Office of Subsistence Management. Cumulative counts through July 18 were 85 kings, 222 sockeyes and 1,880 chums. The weir spacing was redesigned in 2018 to let pink salmon pass through without being counted. Both kings and chums are well below average. In 12 years of counting, both king and chum counts are the lowest ever for this date. The historical average 90% point of passage at the weir is July 22 for kings and the 3rd quarter point is July 22 for chums.

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. Cumulative counts through July 18 were 1,023 kings, 54 sockeyes, 969 chums and 645,000 pinks. There have been limited counts the last 2 days because of high water. King passage is just in the top half of all escapement years for this date, ranking 11th highest in 27 years of count counting, and may still make the lower end of the goal for the 1st time in 3 years. Chum counts are the 5th poorest. Pink counts are the 8th highest. The historical average third-quarter point of passage at the tower is July 17 for pinks, July 19 for kings, and July 22 for chums.

Subdistrict 5 (Shaktoolik)

Subsistence Fishing:

Subsistence fishing: Beach staining is allowed 7 days a week, but all king salmon must be released in the water immediately unharmed. Subsistence gillnet fishing is closed unless open by emergency order.

Commercial Fishing:

Subdistrict 5 opened for a 12-hour period from 7:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. on Saturday, July 23. This commercial fishing period was a pink salmon directed 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 Subdistrict 6 could be retained for personal use but may not be sold. Any king salmon retained for personal use by commercial fishermen must be recorded on the fish ticket. The pink salmon run is sufficient to allow for pink salmon commercial fishing in Subdistricts 5 and 6 based on the buyer's capacity.

The commercial fishing: harvest is 230 sockeye, 4,400 chums and 30,000 pink salmon by 12 permit holders.

Shaktoolik Tower – No escapement goals yet established, A NSEDC project. Cumulative counts through July 17 were 972 kings, 138 sockeyes, 13,000 chums and 1.4

million pinks. There were no counts on July 18 because of high water. Kings rank 4th highest in 9 years of counting. Chums are below average ranking 7th highest, and pinks are well above average ranking 2nd highest. The historical average 90% point of passage at the tower this July 17 for kings and July 23 for pinks, and third-quarter point is July 20 for chums.

Subdistrict 4 (Norton Bay)

Subsistence Fishing:

Net fishing is open 7 days a week.

Commercial Fishing:

Commercial salmon gillnet fishing opened for 48 hours in the subdistrict from 6:00 p.m. Friday, July 22, until 6 p.m. on Sunday, July 24. Nets were 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.

The commercial fishing: harvest is 1 king, 26 sockeyes, 2,900 chum and 2,600 pink salmon by 6 permit holders.

Inglutalik River Tower - no escapement goals yet established. A NSEDC project. Cumulative counts through July 18 were 150 kings, 5,000 chum and 30,000 pinks. Kings were near the recent year average. Chums and pink counts although above last year are well below average.

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

Cumulative counts through July 16 were 579 kings, 14,636 chums and 538,000 pinks. King and chum counts rank highest and pink counts are 2nd highest in the four-year project history.

Subdistrict 3 (Elim)

Subsistence Fishing:

Net fishing is open 7 days a week.

Commercial Fishing:

Commercial salmon gillnet fishing opened for 48 hours in the subdistrict from 6:00 p.m. Friday, July 22, until 6 p.m. on Sunday, July 24. Nets were 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.

Kwiniuk River Tower-Camp Joel - escapement goals: king 250, chum 9,100-32,600, pink 8,400, silver 650-1,300 (aerial survey goal). Fish and Game project.

Cumulative counts through July 18 were 10 kings, 9,291 chums, and 400,000 pinks. King counts have fallen flat. Chums made the tower and of the escapement goal for the 1st time in 3 years. Pink passage has slowed and will fall well short of the million pinks for the 1st time in an even numbered year since 2014. The historical average 90% point of passage at the tower is July 21 for chum and July 22 for kings. The 3rd quarter point for pinks is July 22.

Subdistrict 2 (Golovin)

Subsistence Fishing:

Net fishing is open 7 days a week.

Commercial Fishing:

Commercial salmon gillnet fishing opened for 48 hours in the subdistrict from 6:00 p.m. Friday, July 22, until 6 p.m. on Sunday, July 24. Nets were 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.

Golovin subdistrict commercial fishing harvest was 61 sockeyes, 6,600 chum and 1,200 pink salmon by 6 permit holders.

Niukluk River Tower-escapement goals: chum 23,000, silver 750-600 (aerial survey goal includes Ophir Creek)-NS DC project. Cumulative counts through July 18 were 42 kings, 864 sockeyes, 30,591 chums and 232,000 pinks. Kings and chums are above average, and pinks have slowed and are below average for an even numbered year. The project was operated from 1993 to 2012 and historical averages 3rd quarter of chum and pink passage at the tower is July 20.

Subdistrict 1 (Nome)

Subsistence Fishing:

The subsistence net fishing schedule in all freshwaters subsistence areas and the marine waters west of Cape Nome is from 6 PM Wednesday until 6 PM Monday. East of Cape Nome the marine waters are open 7 days a week. There are no catch limits when fishing

in marine waters. Check the subsistence salmon permits for the freshwater catch limits vary by river. Beach seines, cast nets, dip nets and set gillnets can be used during the net fishing schedules. But only in the subsistence areas.

Commercial Fishing:

There were no commercial fishing periods.

Eldorado River Weir -escapement goals-chum 4,400-14,200. A NSEDC project. Cumulative counts through July 18 were 3 kings, 13 sockeyes, 5,300 chums and 30,700 pinks. Chums are below average but over double the last year and have reached the lower end of the escapement goal for the 13th year in a row. Pinks are average. The historical average third-quarter point of passage at the weir is July 22 for chums and July 24 for pinks.

Nome River Weir - escapement goals: chum 1,600 – 5,300, pink 13,000. A Fish and Game project. Cumulative counts through July 18 were 3 kings, 9 sockeyes, 385 chums and 29,000 pinks. Counts have slowed recently. The historical average midpoint of passage at the weir is July 23 for pinks and July 25 for chums.

Snake River Weir - escapement goal: chum 2,000-4,200. A NSEDC project. Cumulative counts through July 16 were 2 kings, 171 sockeyes, 1,073 chums and 22,000 pinks. The weir was knocked out by high water Sunday July 17. The chum and pink runs are tracking average. The historical average midpoint of passage at the weir is July 24 for chums and pinks.

Solomon River Weir-no escapement goals yet established-Fish and Game project. Cumulative counts through July 18 were 41 chums and 2,740 pinks. The project was delayed this year and aerial survey before the weir was installed estimated 25 chums and 25,000 pinks upriver from the weir this. The historical average midpoint of passage at the weir is July 22 for chums and pinks.

Port Clarence District

All net fishing is closed in the lower Kuzitrin River from 300 yards upriver of the confluence with the Pilgrim River to the Kuzitrin River mouth and the entire Pilgrim River and its tributaries until further notice, Salmon Lake is closed. Elsewhere subsistence fishing is open 7 days a week.

Pilgrim River Floating Weir has an escapement goal of 6,500 – 36,000. Pilgrim River floating Weir: establish goal: sockeye 6,800-36,000 sockeye – A NSEDC project.

Cumulative counts through July 18 were 11 kings, 838 sockeyes, 590 chums and 2 point and 2,636 pinks. Sockeye counts have fallen off the cliff even though all net fishing closed on July 8. In the 20-year project history the only years with lower sockeye passage

are the crash years of 2009 and 2010. The historical average midpoint of sockeye passage at the weir is July 20.

Kotzebue District

Subsistence Fishing:

No subsistence fishing restrictions are expected in 2022.

Commercial Fishing:

Catch through the first 7seven fishing periods was nearly 13,000 chums by 20 permit holders and is over double the number caught during the same time last year.

Kobuk River Test Fishery – A Fish and Game project.

The crew started fishing late last week and catches have been very strong for sheefish and slow for chum salmon.

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