



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Bureau of Land Management
National Park Service
Bureau of Indian Affairs

Federal Subsistence Board News Release



Forest Service

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2023 Federal Subsistence fishery management strategy for the Yukon Area

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.

After considering the request; the testimony at a public hearing; discussions at Tribal Consultations; public discussion at the preseason fishermen meeting; and after coordination with staff from OSM and the management team from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G), the Federal management strategy will be as follows:

- The 2023 run assessment, outlook and anticipated management strategies created jointly by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and ADF&G project poor returns for Chinook, summer and fall Chum salmon. Therefore, salmon fishing closures for these species are needed throughout the Yukon River Area to meet escapement goals. **Closures will begin next week** in the Coastal District and lower river and will be announced in upriver districts based on salmon migration timing, and/or assessment data.
- The numbers projected for Chinook and summer Chum are so poor that no salmon openings for federally qualified subsistence users are justified at this time.
- Salmon fishing closures will be announced starting with the Coastal District and the lower river by advisory announcements jointly written by the USFWS and ADF&G management team and distributed widely by email, Facebook, and fax as in previous seasons.
- While salmon fishing is closed, only non-salmon fishing opportunity will be allowed, and all gillnets will be limited to 4-inch or smaller mesh and 60 feet or less in length. There is not a conservation concern for non-salmon species, so fishing opportunities for non-salmon are not limited to federally qualified subsistence users.
- USFWS and ADF&G will review assessment data to determine if harvestable surplus becomes available inseason. **If subsistence salmon fishing opportunities are offered, the Federal manager will issue special actions to close Federal public waters to the harvest**

of salmon except by federally qualified subsistence users in order to provide a rural preference for federally qualified subsistence users and to continue subsistence uses of salmon in the Yukon Area. These special actions will be issued by the USFWS, separately from the ADF&G advisory announcements, and will include maps showing Federal public waters by district.

This management strategy is necessary because the 2023 Yukon River Chinook and summer Chum salmon runs are forecasted to be poor with little to no harvestable surplus available for subsistence uses. Actions implemented under this strategy will be based on the provisions of Title VIII of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) and delegation of authority letter from the Federal Subsistence Board. ANILCA allows for the closure to nonsubsistence uses “to assure the continued viability of a particular fish or wildlife population.”

For additional information concerning Yukon River Federal Special Actions contact Yukon River Federal Manager, Holly Carroll, at (907) 351-3029.

For information concerning State management actions, contact Yukon River Summer Season Manager, Deena Jallen, in Fairbanks at (907) 459-7274 or in Emmonak at (907) 949-1320.

Information about the Federal Subsistence Management Program may be found on the web at www.doi.gov/subsistence or by visiting www.facebook.com/subsistencealaska. Fishery special actions are posted here: [Fisheries Special Actions | U.S. Department of the Interior \(doi.gov\)](https://www.doi.gov/subsistence/fisheries-special-actions)
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