

**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES
NEWS RELEASE**



*Sam Cotten, Commissioner
Scott Kelley, Director*



Contact:
Jeff Estensen, Area Management Biologist
Christy Gleason, Asst. Area Management Biologist
Phone: (907) 459-7217
Fax: (907) 459-7271

Upper Yukon Area Office
1300 College Road
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701
Date Issued: 9/5/2017

**2017 Yukon River Fall Salmon Fishery News Release # 54
Fall Update # 7, Yukon Area Salmon Fishery
Districts Affected: Yukon Area**

Fall Season Assessment

The 2017 fall chum salmon inseason projection is for a run size greater than 2 million fish. This level of abundance is sufficient to provide for escapement, subsistence harvest, with a surplus available for commercial and personal use purposes. The estimated fall chum salmon run size through September 4 (based on the mainstem sonar near Pilot Station and the downstream harvest) is estimated to be 2,258,000 fish, which is above the historical median of 786,000 fish for that date.

The fall chum salmon run that entered in July has reached the upper portions of the drainage including Chandalar River and U.S./Canada border on the mainstem Yukon and Porcupine rivers. The largest pulse of fall chum salmon that entered August 12 is expected to be near Fort Yukon around September 8, and the Canadian border around September 15. On the Tanana River this group of fall chum salmon should have been near Manley on September 2 and Nenana on September 4. The next pulse entered on August 19 and is expected to be near Tanana/Huslia around September 7, Fort Yukon around September 15, and the Canadian border around September 22. On the Tanana River this group of fall chum salmon should be near Manley on September 9 and near Nenana on September 11.

Coho salmon have been entering the river since mid-August with roughly four pulses. The preliminary coho salmon inseason projection is for a run size greater than 290,000 fish. The estimated coho salmon run size through September 4 (based on the mainstem sonar near Pilot Station and the downstream harvest) is estimated to be 279,000 fish, which is above the historical median of 178,000 fish for that date.

Fall Assessment Projects

Lower Yukon River Cooperative Fall Drift Test Fishing/ADF&G, YDFDA

The cumulative CPUE for the project through September 5 was 3,702.81 fall chum salmon, which is above the historical median of 1,820.60 for this date. Based on median timing the majority of the fall chum salmon run is in the river at this time.

The cumulative CPUE for coho salmon as of September 5 was 729.79, which is above the historical median of 460.74 for this date. Based on median timing 88% of the coho salmon run is in the river at this time.

Mountain Village Drift Test Fishing/Asacarsarmiut Traditional Council

The cumulative CPUE for the project through September 5 was 6,352.09 fall chum salmon, which is above the historical median of 1,981.83 for this date. Based on median timing, 99% of the fall chum salmon run is at this project by this time.

The cumulative CPUE for coho salmon as of September 5 was 1,524.26, which is above the historical median of 1,029.52 for this date. Based on median timing, 92% of the coho salmon run is at this project by this time.

Sonar Project near Pilot Station/ADF&G

The cumulative fall chum salmon passage estimate through September 4 was 1,817,809, which is above the median passage of approximately 687,000 fish for this date. Based on median timing the majority of the fall chum salmon run is at this project by this time.

The cumulative coho salmon passage estimate through September 4 was 159,950, which is above the median passage of approximately 153,000 fish for this date. Based on median timing, 96% of the coho salmon run is at this project by this time.

Chandalar River Sonar/USFWS

The cumulative fall chum salmon passage estimate as of September 4 was 97,737, which is well above the median passage of approximately 65,923 fish for this date. Based on median timing, 30% of the fall chum salmon run is at this project by this time.

Sonar Project near Eagle/ADF&G, DFO

The mainstem sonar operated near Eagle transitioned from Chinook to fall chum salmon beginning August 21. The cumulative fall chum salmon passage estimate through September 4 was 24,380, which is well above the median passage of approximately 10,341 fish for this date.

Upper Porcupine River Sonar near Old Crow, Canada/DFO

The Upper Porcupine sonar transitioned from Chinook to fall chum salmon on August 5 which is earlier than previous years. The cumulative fall chum salmon passage estimate through September 3 was 17,762 fish. For comparison between August 21 and September 3, the cumulative passage of 15,309 is well above the median cumulative passage of 7,400, for this same time frame.

Age Composition Fall Season/ADF&G

The preliminary fall chum salmon age composition from the LYTF 6-inch drift gillnets indicates the run is dominated by age-4 fish, which is typical. The 2017 preliminary proportion of age-4 is 81% which is well above the average of 66%. Correspondingly the proportion of age-5 is 17% which is well below the average of 32%. Females represent 61% of 1,299 fish sampled which is

near the average is 58%. Preliminary age samples from the commercial test fishery also indicate high proportions of age-4 fish at 79% and age-5 fish at 18% based on 720 samples.

Stock Identification

Genetic mixed stock analysis (MSA) on chum salmon for the strata from August 21–28 that passed the mainstem sonar consisted of 17% Border/US (Chandalar/Sheenjok), 16% Canadian and 64% Tanana stocks.

Fall Season Management Strategies

Subsistence salmon fishing in all Alaska areas of the Yukon River are under fall season management. The subsistence fishing schedules in District 4 and Subdistricts 5-A, 5-B, and 5-C have been liberalized to seven days per week, 24 hour per day. Subsistence fishermen may use 7.5 inch or smaller mesh size gillnets and fish wheels. In all areas of the Yukon River, subsistence fishermen using four inch mesh or less gillnets may use an aggregate length of set gillnet not exceeding 150 fathoms in length, and drift gillnets not exceeding 50 fathoms in length. In the upper portion of Subdistrict 4-A, drift gillnets may not exceed 150 feet in length.

Current Management

Coastal District (from the Naskonat Peninsula to 1 mile south of Black River, including the communities of Hooper Bay and Scammon Bay):

Subsistence fishing is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week, with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets.

District 1 (including the area 1 mile south of Black River north to Point Romanof and waters up to 3 miles offshore, including the communities of Nunam-Iqua, Alakanuk, Emmonak, and Kotlik):

Subsistence salmon fishing is open 24 hours per day, seven days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets, except for closures before, during, and after each commercial fishing period. During subsistence salmon fishing closures in District 1, the Pastolik and Pastoliak rivers near Apoon Pass are closed to all gillnet fishing, including gillnets with 4 inch mesh or less, including 500 yards around the mouths.

District 2:

Subsistence salmon fishing is open 24 hours per day, seven days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets, except for closures before, during, and after each commercial fishing period.

District 3:

Subsistence salmon fishing is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets.

Innoko River:

Subsistence salmon fishing is currently open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets.

Subdistrict 4-A (from $\frac{3}{4}$ mile downstream of Old Paradise Village upstream to Cone Point, which includes the mainstem Yukon River communities of Anvik, Grayling, Kaltag, Nulato, and Koyukuk):

Subsistence fishing is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh size set gillnets and fish wheels.

Drift gillnet fishing is open in the upper portion of Subdistrict 4-A only (Stink Creek to the tip of Cone Point and includes Kaltag, Nulato, and Koyukuk) for the remainder of the fall season.

Drift gillnets may not exceed 150 feet in length.

Koyukuk River:

Subsistence fishing is currently open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets.

Subdistrict 4-B and 4-C (from Cone Point upstream to the westernmost edge of Illinois Creek, which includes the communities of Galena and Ruby):

Subsistence fishing is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh size set gillnets and fish wheels.

District 5 (from the western edge of the mouth of Illinois Creek to the U.S./Canada border, including all adjacent tributaries and the communities of Tanana, Rampart, Stevens Village, Beaver, Venetie, Fort Yukon, Chalkyitsik, Circle, and Eagle):

Subsistence salmon fishing is currently open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels.

A fishing permit is required to fish for all species in the following locations: the portion of Subdistrict 5-C and 5-D from the western most tip of Garnet Island upstream to the mouth of Dall River, between the western tip of Garnet Island and the Dall River (Dalton Highway bridge area) and from the upstream mouth of 22 Mile Slough to the U.S./Canada border. Subsistence fishermen outside of the permit area are encouraged to fill out their subsistence salmon catch calendars. Calendars and subsistence fishing permits are available from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game office in Fairbanks.

Subdistricts 6-A and 6-B (from the mouth of the Tanana River upstream to the regulatory marker at the mouth of the Wood River, which includes the communities of Manley, Minto, and Nenana):

Subsistence fishing is open on the regulatory fishing schedule of two 42-hour periods per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels:

- **6 p.m. Fridays to noon Sundays**
- **6 p.m. Mondays to noon Wednesdays**

Kantishna River:

Subsistence fishing is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels.

Old Minto Area:

Subsistence fishing is on the regulatory subsistence fishing schedule of 5 days per week from 6 p.m. Fridays until 6 p.m. Wednesdays with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels.

Subsistence fishermen are reminded that a subsistence fishing permit is required to fish for salmon in the Tanana River drainage. Permits are available from the ADF&G office in Fairbanks. Subsistence fishermen fishing in the upper portion of Subdistrict 6-B, from three miles upstream of the mouth of Totchaket Slough to Wood River, are required to report their harvest catches to the department by **4:30 PM Thursday** each week by contacting the department at **(907) 459-7388**. When you call, please provide your name, permit number, fishing location, and daily catch by species for that week.

Upper Tanana Area (the Tanana River from the confluence with the mouth of Volkmar River on the north bank and the mouth of the Johnson River on the south bank upstream to the Tanana River headwaters, including the communities of Healy Lake, Dot Lake, Tanacross, Northway, and the Tok area):

Subsistence fishing is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels.

A subsistence fishing permit is required to fish in the Upper Tanana River Drainage.

Subdistricts 6-C (Personal use fishery from the regulatory marker at the mouth of the Wood River upstream to the downstream mouth of the Salcha River, which includes the communities of Fairbanks, North Pole, and Salcha):

Personal use fishing is open on the regulatory fishing schedule of two 42-hour periods per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels:

- **6 p.m. Fridays to noon Sundays**
- **6 p.m. Mondays to noon Wednesdays**

A reminder to fishermen that a personal use salmon fishing permit and a sport fish license are required to fish in Subdistrict 6-C of the Tanana River. Fishermen are required to report their harvest catches to the department by **4:30 PM Thursday** each week by contacting the department at **(907) 459-7388**. When you call, please provide your name, permit number, fishing location, and daily catch by species for that week.

Fall Season Commercial Salmon Fishing

The fall chum directed commercial fishery ended by regulation on August 31 in Districts 1 and 2. In accordance with the Yukon River Coho Salmon Management Plan, the coho salmon directed commercial fishing season opened in District 1 on September 1 and will close by regulation after September 10. A commercial period for District 1 has been announced for Wednesday, September 6, and the department does not anticipate any further commercial openings in either Districts 1 or 2 after September 6.

In the Upper Yukon, the fall chum salmon commercial fishing season is open in District 4, Subdistricts 5-B and 5-C, and District 6. All commercial fishermen must make sure they have a buyer before fishing each opening. Commercial fishermen may use fish wheels and gillnets restricted to 6-inch or smaller mesh size.

The sale of incidentally caught Chinook salmon in the fall chum salmon directed commercial fisheries is prohibited. Commercial gillnet fishermen can release live Chinook salmon or use them for subsistence purposes. Chinook salmon retained from commercial gear must be recorded on a fish ticket as retained but not sold.

Processors, catcher sellers, or direct marketers intending to operate in the Yukon Area must notify the department of their intent prior to operating by contacting the Fairbanks office at 459-7274.

District 1, including the Set Net Only Area:

Period #18: 6-hour period from 2:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. Wednesday, September 6.

Verbal reports from District 1 period #17 commercial opening on September 3 indicate a preliminary harvest of 1,177 fall chum and 1,953 coho salmon from 126 deliveries. The preliminary cumulative commercial harvest through September 3 in District 1 is 326,848 fall chum and 95,868 coho salmon.

District 2:

There are no commercial announcements at this time.

Verbal reports from District 2 period #15 commercial opening on August 25 indicate a preliminary harvest of 8,473 fall chum and 7,683 coho salmon from 79 deliveries. The preliminary cumulative commercial harvest through August 28 in District 2 is 134,913 fall chum salmon and 33,598 coho salmon.

Subdistrict 5-B, and 5-C Commercial Fishing Schedule:

Commercial fishing in Subdistricts 5-B and 5-C, is open 24 hours per day, seven days per week until further notice. Each commercial fishing period will be 7-days and will end at 12:00 p.m. Mondays each week until further notice. Fishermen may use fish wheels or gillnets with 6 inch or smaller mesh size. Commercial fishermen should confirm their market before they fish.

The preliminary cumulative commercial harvest through August 14 is 1,952 fall chum salmon.

Subdistrict 6-A, 6-B, and 6-C (from the mouth of the Tanana River upstream to the downstream mouth of the Salcha River, which includes the communities of Manley, Minto, Nenana, Fairbanks, North Pole, and Salcha):

Commercial fishing is open for two 42-hour fishing periods per week on the following schedule with 6-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels:

- **6 p.m. Fridays, until noon Sundays**
- **6 p.m. Mondays, until noon Wednesdays**

Commercial fishermen should coordinate with the buyer on a daily basis regarding scheduling deliveries. Commercial fish wheels in District 6 are not required to be manned. All salmon harvested during commercial fishing operations must be recorded on a fish ticket at the time of sale. Chinook salmon may not be sold. All Chinook salmon caught but not sold must also be recorded on the fish ticket. Other fish species caught but not sold must also be recorded on the fish ticket. Processors, catcher-sellers, or direct marketers should notify the department of their intent to operate by contacting the Fairbanks office at 459-7274.

Fishing schedules, test fish catches and sonar counts are available 24 hours a day at (866) 479-7387 (toll free outside of Fairbanks); in Fairbanks, call (907) 459-7387.

If you have any questions, please call ADF&G in Emmonak at (907) 949-1320, the ADF&G office in Fairbanks at (907) 459-7274 or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Fairbanks at (907) 455-1849.

This is an announcement by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

-end-