

**FISHERIES UPDATE FOR THE WEEK OF AUGUST 3-9, 2020.** Report #11  
Compiled by George Pappas - (907) 786-3822, [George\\_Pappas@fws.gov](mailto:George_Pappas@fws.gov) Office of  
Subsistence Management, USFWS.

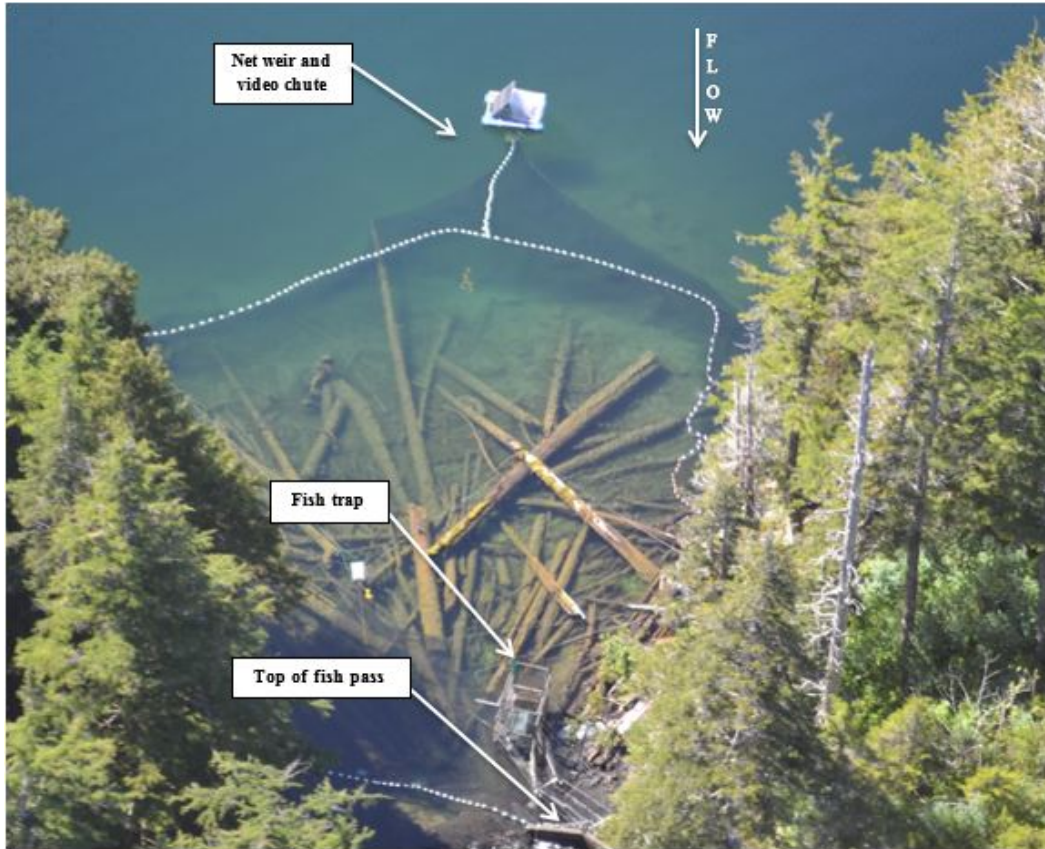
The purpose of the weekly fisheries update is to provide the reader with an overall summary of the status of subsistence related fisheries throughout the state of Alaska. The target audience is the Federal Subsistence Board and its Staff Committee. The report was compiled with the assistance of the Federal 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**

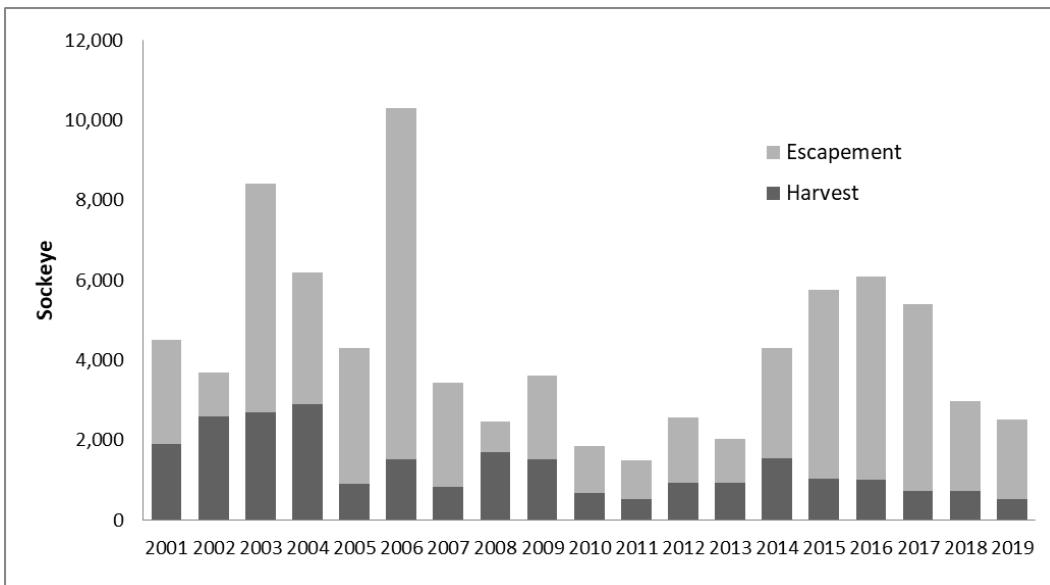
**Sitka and Hoonah Area – Justin Koller, Forest Service, Tongass National Forest**  
Justin Koller, (907) 747-4297 [justin.koller@usda.gov](mailto:justin.koller@usda.gov)

**Herring** – There was no commercial herring fishery in Sitka Sound in 2020. Please see this [summary of Sitka Sound herring 2020](#). Also, [summary of southeast Alaska herring 2020](#).

**Falls Lake** - The Forest Service and the Organized Village of Kake operate the Falls Lake trap and video net weir which were installed June 25. The first Sockeye Salmon was counted on July 3, which is about a week earlier than average. As of August 9, 201 Sockeye Salmon have been counted and about 250 have been harvested. The run this year appears to be the worst since 2001 when monitoring began. The final escapement estimate in 2019 was 1,983 while the final subsistence and sport harvest in the marine terminal area was 528. Subsistence harvest accounted for 92% of terminal area harvest.



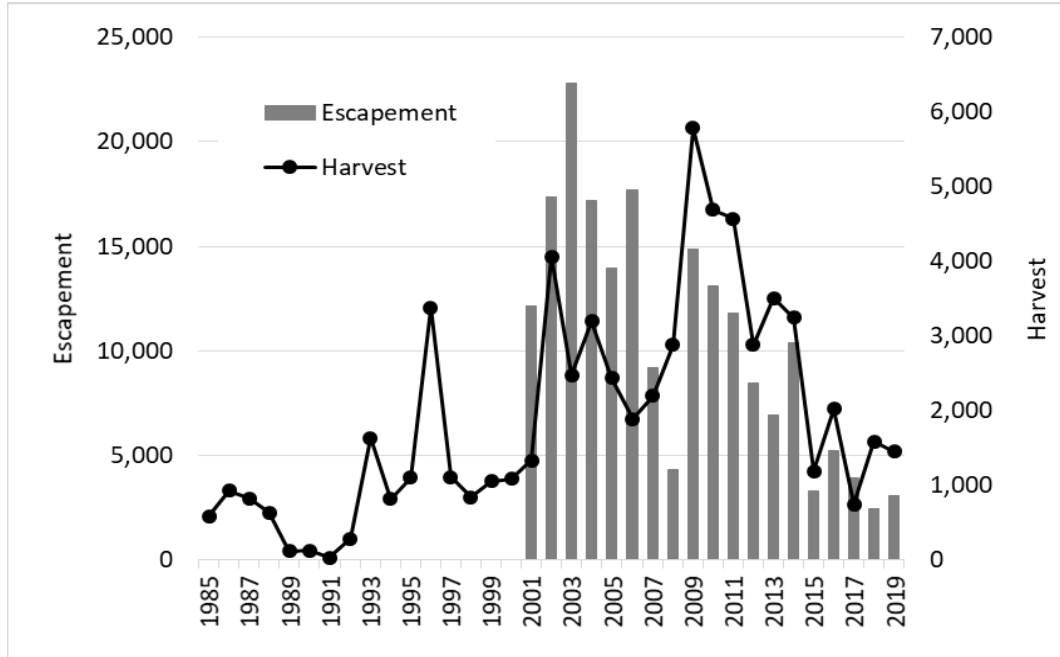
**Figure 1.** Aerial photo of the Falls Lake outlet illustrating the typical location of weir equipment.



**Figure 2.** Escapement plus harvest equals total terminal run of Sockeye Salmon at Falls Lake, 2001-2019.

**Klag Bay** - The Sitka Tribe of Alaska operates the Sockeye Salmon monitoring weir at Klag Bay which was installed the week of June 22. As of August 9, 2,750 Sockeye

Salmon have been counted and at least 1,457 have been harvested. The run appears to be below average this year. In 2019, approximately 3,036 Sockeye Salmon migrated past the weir while an estimated 1,450 were harvested in the marine terminal area subsistence and sport fishery. Subsistence harvest accounted for over 99% of terminal area harvest.

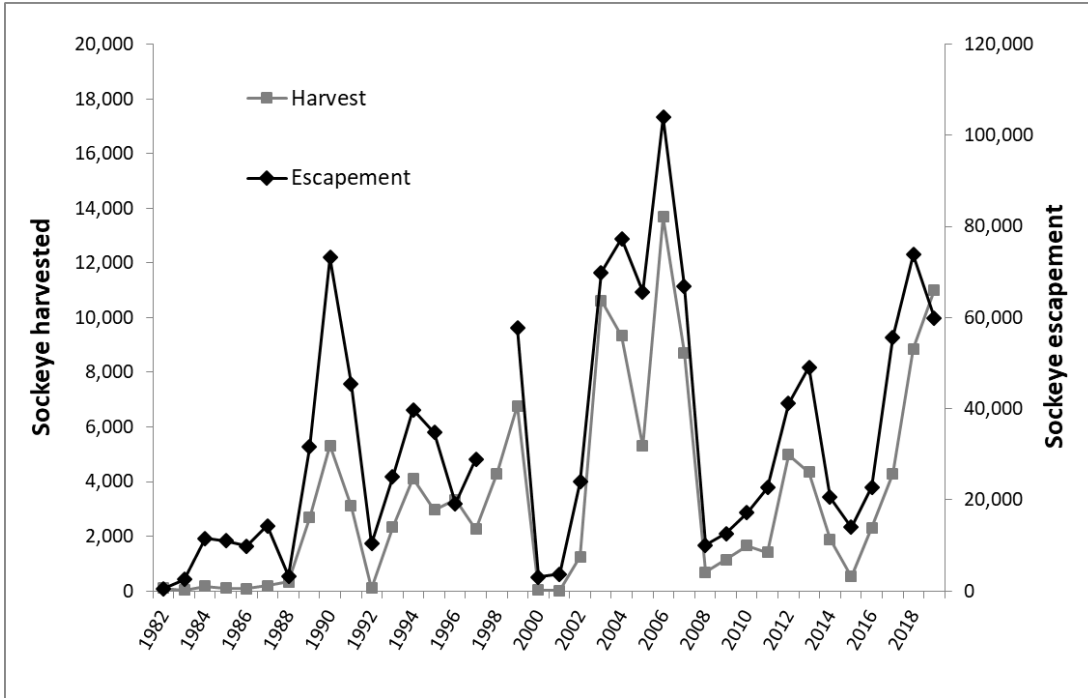


**Figure 3.** Reported harvest and escapement for Klag Lake Sockeye Salmon, 2001-2019.

**Redoubt Lake** - The Forest Service operates the Redoubt Lake weir which was operational as of June 13. As of August 9, 32,649 Sockeye Salmon have been counted. The prediction model was estimating that about 34,000 Sockeye Salmon will enter Redoubt Lake this year. The late run has caused the run to outperform the model prediction this year. On July 22, in accordance with the Redoubt Lake Management Plan, the individual/household subsistence possession limit was set at 25 and the individual/household subsistence annual limit was set at 100.

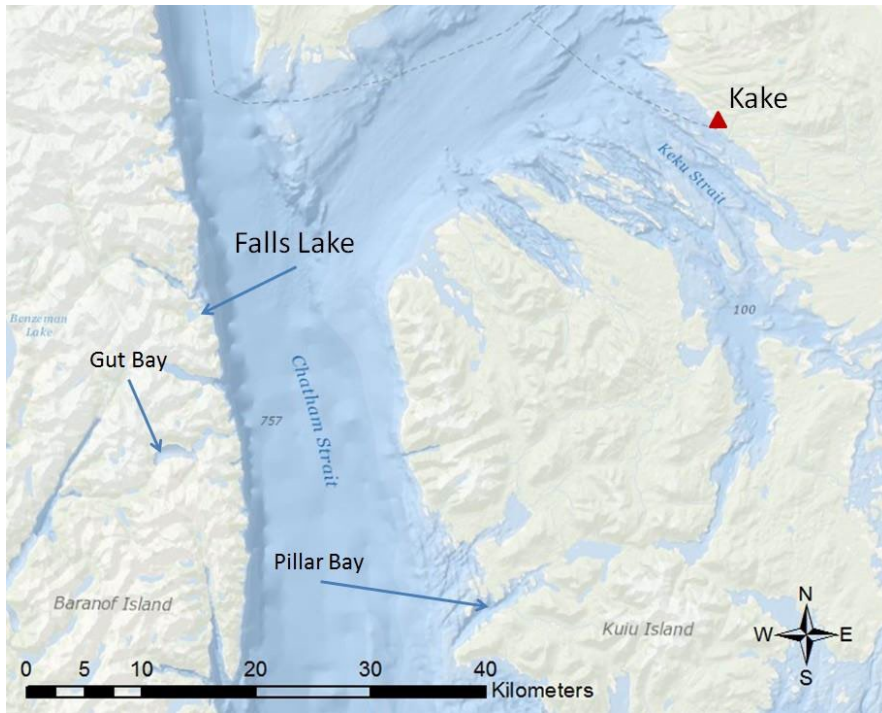
In 2019, an estimated 59,917 Sockeye Salmon passed through the weir into Redoubt Lake and about 11,000 were harvested. On July 3, in accordance with the Redoubt Lake Management Plan, the individual/household subsistence possession limit was set at 25 and the individual/household subsistence annual limit was set at 100. Almost 30,000 Sockeye Salmon were harvested in commercial fishery openings throughout the season.

[News release, Sockeye Salmon limits 2020](#)



**Figure 4.** Annual Sockeye Salmon expanded escapement into Redoubt Lake and subsistence harvest for years with data: 1953 to 1955, 1982 to 1997, and 1999 to 2019. The weir was not operated in 1998.

**Gut Bay** - The Forest Service and the Organized Village of Kake monitor escapement and harvest of Gut Bay Sockeye Salmon. Gut Bay is located south of Falls Lake on Baranof Island and an important source of Sockeye Salmon for the village of Kake. Very little is known about the magnitude of this run. In 2019, 881 Sockeye Salmon were counted at the weir and about 200 were harvested in the state subsistence fishery which was open until July 20. The camp and equipment installation was completed on June 18. As of August 9, about 50 sockeye have been counted and at least 150 have been harvested. The run appears to be very weak this year. Recent high flows damaged the weir and we are not sure how many Sockeye Salmon passed undetected. Underwater video footage should reveal if a sizable number passed undetected.



**Figure 5.** Location of Gut Bay in relation to Falls Lake and the village of Kake

**Petersburg and Wrangell Area – Robert Cross, Forest Service, Tongass National Forest** Robert Cross, (907)772-5944 [robert.cross@usda.gov](mailto:robert.cross@usda.gov)

The 2020 Federal Stikine River Chinook subsistence fishery was closed by the in-season manager. The Chinook run was stronger than predicted, indicating the potential for a future Chinook Salmon season on the Stikine River. The Federal Stikine River Sockeye Salmon subsistence fishery began Sunday, June 21 and ended July 31. Despite the river being high, the participation in the fishery was high but harvest remained low throughout the season. The Tahltan Lake portion of the Stikine River Sockeye Salmon run was strong, however, the Mainstem component of the run was weak which resulted in a poor overall Sockeye harvest.

The Stikine River Coho Salmon season is underway with harvesters reporting high numbers of Pink Salmon in their nets. A total of 129 Stikine River Federal subsistence salmon permits (FFSE07) and 38 General Fish permits (FFSE04) have been issued for residents in the Wrangell and Petersburg Districts.

**Yakutat, Juneau, and Admiralty areas of Northern Southeast Alaska - Jake Musslewhite (907-789-6256; [jacob.g.musslewhite@usda.gov](mailto:jacob.g.musslewhite@usda.gov)), Forest Service, Tongass National Forest**

Neva Lake Sockeye Salmon: A crew from the Forest Service installed the Neva Lake weir near Excursion Inlet on June 23 (Figure 1). This swim-through video weir is remotely monitored and maintained by a Hoonah Indian Association crew living in Excursion Inlet. Live video from the weir is available on the internet at <http://nevalake.ddns.net:81>. Viewers can see underwater views of the video chute, site views from the surveillance cameras, and view recent motion-triggered clips.

As of August 8, a total of 2,329 Sockeye Salmon have been counted through the Neva weir. Based on historical run timing, we are projecting a total escapement of just under 4,000 fish. In addition to sockeye, we have also counted 2,617 Dolly Varden, and have just started seeing the first pink salmon (Figure 2) of the year (about 50 so far).



*Figure 1. The video weir at Neva Lake, June 24, 2020.*



*Figure 2. A Pink Salmon swims through the Neva Lake video weir, August 10, 2020.*

Sitkoh Lake Sockeye Salmon: The Sitkoh Lake video weir was installed on July 6-8 by a Forest Service biologist with the help of Student Conservation Association interns. The project uses a pair of remotely monitored video net weirs to count fish entering Sitkoh Lake, on the southeast corner of Chichagof Island (Figures 3 and 4). Video from the site is streamed to the Angoon Community Association office, where it is recorded on a computer. Personnel from the ACA will monitor the weir and use video to count fish entering the lake. Live video feed and clips from the weir can be accessed over the internet at <http://sitkohlake.ddns.net:81> . However, recent issues with the mountaintop repeater have temporarily cut the live video feed until it can be repaired.



*Figure 3. The video weir at the outlet of Sitkoh Lake, July 9, 2020.*



*Figure 4. This brown bear has become a regular at the Sitkoh Lake weir, August 8, 2020.*



**Northern Inside waters:** It's mostly grim news for salmon fisheries throughout Northern Southeast inside waters this year. The hatchery chum salmon return has been dismal, and DIPAC is struggling to meet broodstock goals. Pink salmon returns have also been poor, and purse seine fisheries have been limited to the Point Augusta index fishery. However, the District 13 (outside coast) fisheries are just beginning, and they have been somewhat stronger in recent years. On the gillnet front, sockeye catches in District 11 (Taku and Stephens Passage) are setting record lows. It's a similar story in District 15 (Lynn Canal), with poor sockeye and chum salmon harvests throughout the season. The closest thing to a bright spot is at Chilkoot Lake, where the escapement has reached the lower bound of the escapement goal.

**Yakutat:** Things are a little better in the Yakutat neighborhood. At the Situk weir, high water prompted the removal of the weir after over 55,000 sockeye had been counted through the weir. This count was well within the escapement goal of 30,000 – 70,000 fish. The actual escapement was likely a little higher, as there have been plenty of days when the weir was under water. There were also 1,129 Chinook counted through the weir, exceeding the escapement goal of 450 – 1,050 large fish, which is great news for a stock that has struggled in recent years. The commercial gillnet fishery has been hampered by storms, so effort has been low.

**Prince of Wales and Ketchikan District Area – Jeff Reeves, Forest Service, Tongass National Forest. (907) 826-1649 [jreeves@fs.fed.us](mailto:jreeves@fs.fed.us)**

The 2020 subsistence salmon fishery for Southeast Alaska and Yakutat areas has had 161 permits issued to date for the fishery.

Chinook Salmon are still present in good numbers in the local Craig and Klawock area are being harvested by subsistence users fishing under sport fishing regulations at this time. On June 15, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) increased harvest opportunity in outside waters by increasing the daily harvest limit to three fish. On July 11<sup>th</sup>, ADF&G further liberalized the resident daily harvest limit by increasing the daily harvest limit to four fish. Beginning July 31, ADF&G initiated yet another liberalization to Chinook Salmon fishing by increasing the daily harvest limit to five fish. Many local subsistence users continue to utilize these liberalized harvest regulations.

All State managed Sockeye Salmon fisheries in the area are closed now, except Hetta (August 31) and Klawock (August 7). Additional opportunity for directed Coho Salmon fishing at Klawock will begin in the next several weeks.

The first summer troll opening (non-hatchery terminal harvest) for Chinook Salmon closed on July 6. Other than in designated terminal harvest areas, retention of Chinook Salmon is now prohibited in the troll fishery. All power and hand troll vessels are now actively pursuing the other salmon species.

The Kendrick Bay (District 2) terminal seine fishery for Chum Salmon and the Tree Point (District 1) drift-gillnet fishery both began on June 21. The first directed seine fishery in outside coastal waters of District 4 occurred on July 19. Estimated commercial harvests

for Districts 1-4 are: 12,935 Chinook Salmon, 92,800 Sockeye Salmon, 29,300 Coho Salmon, 1,919,650 Pink Salmon and 385,600 Chum Salmon.

There are two Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program funded projects funded on Prince of Wales Island this season. The Hetta Lake weir became operational on June 8 and has passed 637 Sockeye Salmon to date. The Eek Lake weir became operational on June 15 and has passed 6 Sockeye Salmon to date.

Although there is not a project funded under the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program, the Klawock River fish hatchery installed weir pickets on July 1. The first Sockeye Salmon counted through the weir was on July 18. Total counts into Klawock Lake are: 149 Sockeye Salmon, 82 Pink Salmon, 1 Chum Salmon and 31 Coho Salmon.

### **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](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, 8/10/2020 Update – Dave Sarafin, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve (WRST), (907) 205-0544, [dave\\_sarafin@nps.gov](mailto:dave_sarafin@nps.gov)**

This will be the last weekly summary for the 2020 season.

The commercial fishery in the Copper River District was limited in response to a weak salmon return. Total commercial harvest reported for the season was 97,360 Sockeye Salmon and 5,845 Chinook Salmon. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG)

reports this to be the 4th lowest commercial harvest to date in the last 50 years for the district.

The ADFG sonar at Miles Lake (located just downstream of the Million Dollar Bridge in the Copper River) recorded salmon passage from May 19 through July 28; providing a season total estimate of 530,313 salmon migrating upstream. This estimate is 85% of the cumulative management objective of 624,709 salmon for this date. The ADFG reports this to be the 12<sup>th</sup> lowest season estimate to date on record (1978-2020).

The Native Village of Eyak Baird Canyon fish wheels captured and tagged a total of 2,466 Chinook Salmon for the season. The upriver fish wheels at Canyon Creek captured and examined 1,203 Chinook Salmon for the season, of which, 119 were recaptured fish that had been tagged at the downstream wheels.

Performance in the commercial fishery and in-river sonar salmon passage estimates are the primary in-season assessments of the salmon return to the Copper River. The overall returns of both Sockeye and Chinook Salmon have been weak. In-river assessments of the Chinook Salmon return, along with assumptions of up-river harvests, indicate that the sustainable escapement goal (SEG) of 24,000 fish will likely not be met for this season. As well, the minimum threshold 360,000 fish of the wild stock Sockeye Salmon SEG range of 360,000 to 750,000 may not be achieved this season. This includes assumptions of the additional factors of up-river harvests, hatchery stock contribution, and the non-Sockeye Salmon component of the sonar passage estimates. No Federal Special Actions have been issued by the in-season manager this season.

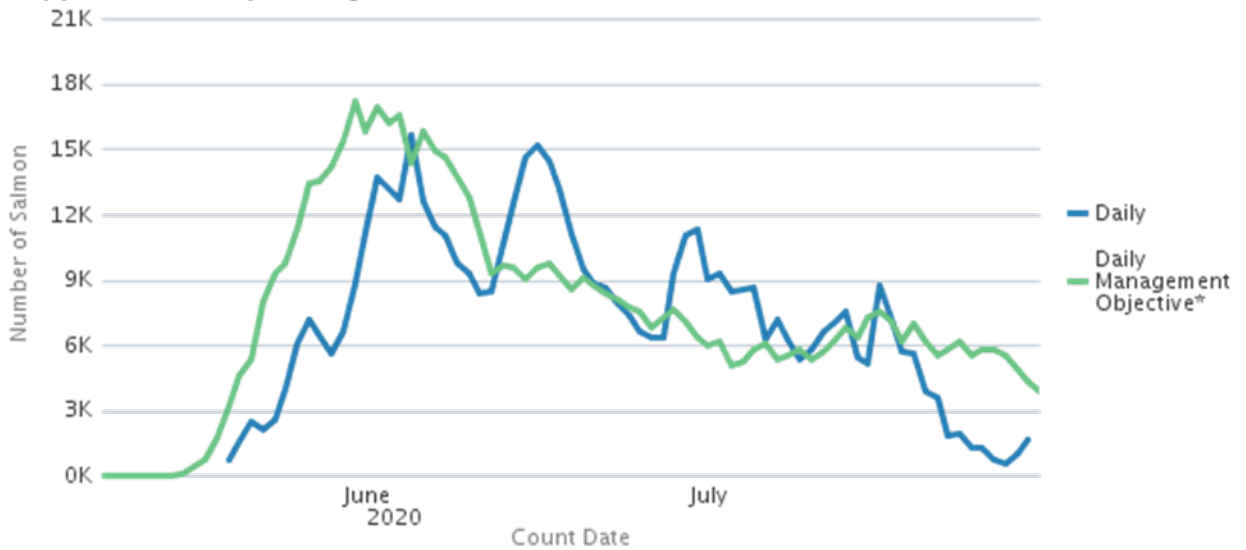
The State subsistence fishery in the Glennallen Subdistrict has been open since June 1. Effective June 20, the State sport fishery annual limit was reduced from 4 to 1 Chinook Salmon for the Upper Copper River drainage. Effective August 3, the Sockeye Salmon sport fisheries of the Upper Copper River drainage closed for the remainder of the season. Effective June 22, the Chitina personal use fishery was closed to the retention of Chinook Salmon. The personal use fishery in the Chitina Subdistrict is currently closed and will remain closed for the remainder of August to conserve Sockeye Salmon for escapement.

The Federal subsistence fisheries in the Chitina Subdistrict, the Glennallen Subdistrict, and the Batzulnetas area opened on May 15 and are expected to remain open through September 30. Through the Office of Subsistence Management (OSM) Federal subsistence permit website, two hundred and twelve (212) Chitina Subdistrict permits, three hundred and seventy-one (371) Glennallen Subdistrict permits, and one (1) Batzulnetas area permits have been issued to date.

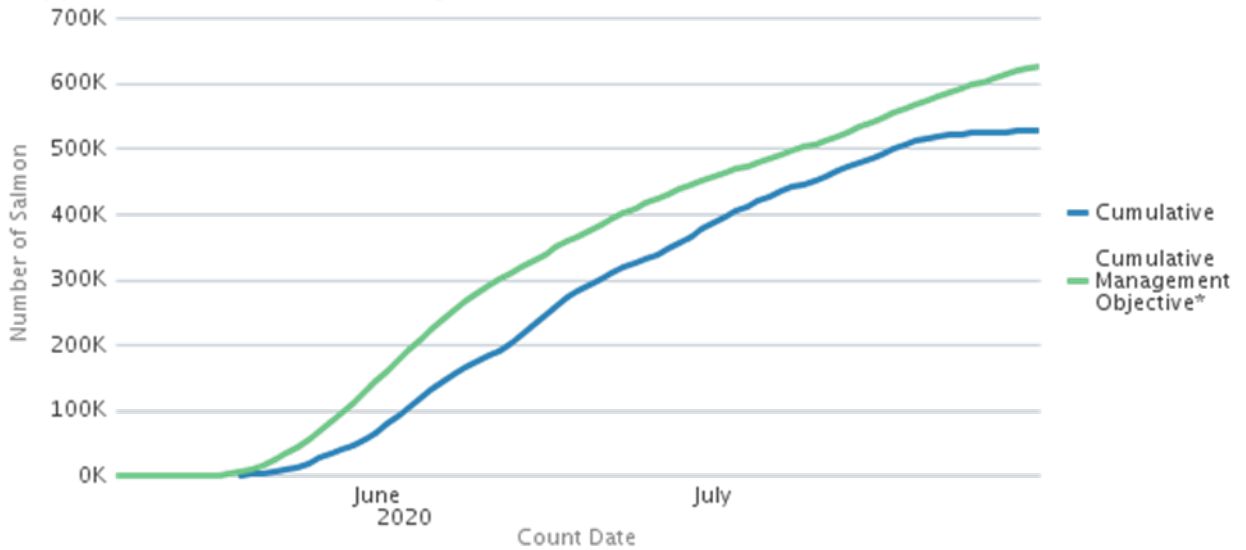
The ADFG counting tower in the Gulkana River began operation on June 2. The reported cumulative passage estimate through August 9 is 2,406 Chinook Salmon. This is approximately 29% of the 2019 season count of 8,310 fish through this date of the season; however, periods of high water and associated turbidity limited counts on some days of the 2020 season.

### 2020 Upper Copper River Salmon Passage at Miles Lake Sonar through July 28 (end of season)

#### Copper River Daily Passage



#### Copper River Cumulative Passage



Source:

[http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareacopperriver.salmon\\_escapement](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareacopperriver.salmon_escapement)

Links:

ADF&G Miles Lake daily sonar estimates

[http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareacopperriver.salmon\\_escapement](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>

ADF&G Copper River Inseason Commercial Harvest Estimates

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareacopperriver.harvestsummary>

ADF&G Emergency Orders and News Releases

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/EONR/index.cfm?ADFG=area.list&Year=2018&AreaID=33>

ADF&G Gulkana River counting tower

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/FishCounts/index.cfm?ADFG=main.displayResults&COUNTLOCATIONID=6&SpeciesID=410>

**PWS and Copper River Delta – Milo Burcham, Chugach National Forest, Cordova.**  
(907) 424-4759 [mburcham@fs.fed.us](mailto:mburcham@fs.fed.us)

### **7 August 2020**

A total of 44 Federal Subsistence fishing permits have been issued for freshwaters within the Chugach National Forest portion of the Prince William Sound area of to date. Harvest by this year's permit holders will not be known until reports are returned this winter. One-hundred and twenty permits were issued in 2019 resulting in the reported harvest of 617 coho and 116 sockeye from fresh waters of the Copper River Delta.

**COOK INLET AREA – Kenneth Gates, Acting Delegated Official, Kenai Fish and Wildlife Field Office** (907) 260-0132 [Kenneth\\_Gates@FWS.GOV](mailto:Kenneth_Gates@FWS.GOV)

The 2020 subsistence dip net fisheries for salmon began on the Kenai and Kasilof rivers June 15 and June 16, respectively. Harvest reported through August 8 in the dip net fishery at Russian River Falls is 957 Sockeye Salmon. Forty-one Sockeye Salmon have been harvested in the Kasilof River dip net fishery. The rod and reel fishery on the Kenai River also opened on June 11 with the same seasons and areas as for the taking of fish under Alaska sport fishing regulations. To date, 27 sockeye salmon have been taken by rod and reel from the Russian River.

The Kasilof River experimental community gillnet fishery began on June 16 and continues through August 15. Harvest reported through July 25 includes 621 Sockeye Salmon.

Regulatory periods for the Kenai River community gillnet fishery are from July 1 through August 15 and from September 10 – 30. Harvest of sockeye salmon in this fishery began on July 19. Harvest to date in this fishery totals 3,163 Sockeye Salmon and 18 Coho Salmon. Harvest during this reporting period totals 1,887 sockeye salmon and 18 Coho Salmon.

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) 487-0226 or [michael\\_brady@fws.gov](mailto:michael_brady@fws.gov) or Kevin Van Hatten (907) 487-0230  
[Kevin\\_VanHatten@fws.gov](mailto:Kevin_VanHatten@fws.gov)

Subsistence fishing around Kodiak has continued to be slow for the past 2 weeks. Many villagers have continued to hunt deer to meet their subsistence needs. Most of the weirs operated by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game – Commercial Fisheries Division will be shut down in the coming weeks. For those villagers that wanted to harvest more fish, they are targeting Coho salmon.

Pink Salmon are continuing strong in the Buskin River which appears to be having about above average run of even-year pinks. Coho Salmon are being caught by sport fishing users around Kodiak.

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

***Federal Subsistence Fisheries Regulations for Kodiak Area***  
<http://alaska.fws.gov/asm/pdf/fishregs13/kodiak.pdf>

***BRISTOL BAY, CHIGNIK, ALASKA PENINSULA, and ALEUTIAN ISLANDS –  
Jonathon Gerken Fisheries Branch Chief Anchorage Fish and Wildlife Field Office***  
**FISHERIES UPDATE FOR THE WEEK OF August 3, 2020.**  
(907) 271-2776 [Jonathon\\_Gerken@fws.gov](mailto:Jonathon_Gerken@fws.gov)

No summary submitted for this reporting period.

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.

The ADFG issues information for COVID-19: Under Alaska's Health Mandates 10, 17, and 18, Subsistence fishing is Essential and is part of Alaska's Essential Services and Critical Infrastructure. Subsistence fishermen should ensure that all travel and other activities follow protocols in Alaska COVID-19 Health Mandates. COVID-19 Health Mandates may be found here: <https://gov.alaska.gov/home/covid19-healthmandates/>

Bristol Bay:

The 2020 Bristol Bay Sockeye Salmon run was forecast to be approximately 48 million fish for the nine river systems: Kvichak, Alagnak, Naknek, Egegik, Ugashik, Wood, Igushik, Nushagak, and Togiak.

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

Escapement Goals (current Sockeye Salmon escapement for August 2): All Sockeye Salmon escapement goals were met. The Nushagak Chinook Salmon escapement goal did not meet the lower end of the goal.

Kvichak	SEG = 2,000,000 – 10,000,000, current escapement = 4,030,968
Alagnak	SEG = 320,000 minimum, current escapement = 2,383,062
Naknek	SEG = 800,000 – 2,000,000, current escapement = 4,112,160
Egegik	SEG = 800,000 – 2,000,000, current escapement = 2,389,728
Ugashik	SEG = 500,000 – 1,400,000, current escapement = 1,745,940
Wood River	SEG = 700,000 – 1,800,000, current escapement = 2,243,886
Igushik	SEG = 150,000 – 400,000, current escapement = 317,844
Nushagak	SEG = 370,000 – 900,000, current escapement = 1,228,504
Nushagak (Chinook)	SEG = 55,000 – 270,000, current escapement = 42,721
Togiak	SEG = 150,000 – 270,000, current escapement = 207,870

All areas will provide subsistence harvest opportunity.

The total commercial harvest for Sockeye Salmon as of August 2 is approximately 39.2 million fish.

Chignik:

The 2020 Sockeye Salmon forecasted run size for the Chignik River Management Area (CMA). The CMA is composed of five fishing districts: Eastern, Central, Chignik Bay, Western, and Perryville. The Sockeye Salmon run is composed of an early run (June 1 – July 31) and late run (July 31 – September). These dates generally describe the run-timing and overlap between runs occurs.

As of August 2, approximately 138,448 early run Sockeye Salmon have been enumerated. The early run will not make the lower end of the escapement.

Subsistence harvest reports indicate minimal harvests.

The late run Sockeye Salmon count for August 2 is 112,052 fish. The escapement objective for this time period is 160,000 – 290,000 fish. It is unlikely that the late run will make the lower end of the escapement goal.

The Chinook Salmon count for August 2 is 1,099 fish. Restrictions to Chinook Salmon fishing in the sportfish (Emergency Order # 2-KS-4-38-20), State subsistence Emergency Order #4-FS-L-SUB-02-20, and Federal subsistence (Emergency Special Action #08-KS-01-20) fisheries was restricted on July 18 due to the low numbers of fish enumerated at

the weir and are in place until August 9. These actions were taken collaboratively with the ADFG commercial and sportfish division. Subsistence users throughout the Chignik area also voiced concerns about the low Chinook Salmon return and requested additional restrictions. It is unlikely that the Chinook Salmon return will make the lower end of the escapement goal.

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:

There are numerous salmon stocks and fisheries throughout the Alaska Peninsula. Federal waters are primarily located on upper headwater portions of the streams flowing on the North Peninsula, whereas Federal waters on those streams flowing on the South Peninsula are more encompassing within each watershed. Subsistence fisheries in both North and South Peninsula areas take place in marine environments under State of Alaska subsistence fishing permits. Annual subsistence harvest for all species in all areas is typically around 10,000 fish.

North Peninsula: The 2020 Sockeye Salmon run size projections are 362,000 fish for the Nelson River and 408,000 fish for late-run Bear Lake. The cumulative commercial harvest as of August 2 is approximately 1.5 million fish with Sockeye Salmon being the predominant species harvested.

North Peninsula Management Area Escapement Goals (current Sockeye Salmon escapement for August 2):

Nelson River	BEG = 97,000 – 219,000, current escapement = 162,164
Late-run Bear Lake	BEG = 117,000 – 195,000, current escapement = 317,095

South Peninsula: Commercial fishing has occurred on the South Peninsula in the Shumagin Islands and South Umiak Districts. Fishing in the Dolgoi District has not occurred due to low escapement number enumerated in Chignik River weir. The cumulative commercial harvest as of August 2 is approximately 4.0 million with pink salmon being the predominant species harvested.

South Peninsula Management Area Escapement Counts (current Sockeye Salmon escapement for August 2):

Inlik River current escapement = 40,019
Orzinski River current escapement = 6,174
Sandy River current escapement = 55,898



McLees River current escapement = 5,037 – McLees River counts are lower than the 2017 to 2011 average of 21,882 fish.

#### Aleutian Islands.

All fisheries are forecast to meet escapement goals and provide subsistence harvest opportunity.

#### ***Federal Subsistence Fisheries Regulations for Bristol Bay Area***

[http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish\\_shell/upload/Bristol.pdf](http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish_shell/upload/Bristol.pdf)

#### ***Federal Subsistence Fisheries Regulations for Chignik Area***

[http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish\\_shell/upload/chignik.pdf](http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish_shell/upload/chignik.pdf)

#### **Southcentral Alaska Web Links**

##### ***Federal Subsistence Management Fisheries News Releases***

<http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/news/fishing/index.cfm>

##### ***ADF&G Sport and Personal Use Fishing News Release and Emergency Order link***

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=fishingSportFishingInfo.R2>

##### ***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 Southcentral Alaska***

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/FishingReports/index.cfm?ADFG=R2.Home>

##### ***Statewide ADF&G Fish counts:***

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/FishCounts/>

#### **YUKON RIVER**

**Gerald Maschmann, Fish Biologist USFWS Fairbanks Office.**

(907) 456-0406, [Gerald\\_Maschmann@fws.gov](mailto:Gerald_Maschmann@fws.gov)

The Emmonak Field Office will be **closed** for summer management activities due to COVID-19 concerns. Essential services will be provided to fishermen online and over the phone.

#### **Summer Season Summary**

The summer season for Yukon River fisheries has ended in the lower and middle river and management has shifted to the fall season. Subdistricts 5-A, 5-B, and 5-C will transition to fall season management on August 11. Subdistrict 5-D and District 6 are still under summer season management. Unfortunately, the Chena River sonar and counting tower was ended early due to flooding hindering the operation of the project. Daily passage numbers are being closely monitored at the Eagle sonar, the only

remaining summer season assessment project still operating. At this time, managers are disappointed in the estimated passage of Chinook Salmon past the Eagle sonar. Through August 9, 28,547 Chinook Salmon have been estimated passing the sonar, below the average of 55,017 and the lowest passage on record for this date. This is much less than projected based on the Pilot Station sonar passage of approximately 160,000 Chinook Salmon. The average date for three-quarters passage in late years at the Eagle sonar is August 1. Daily passage estimates have been sliding downwards beginning August 5. At this time, managers are anticipating that our border obligations into Canada will not be met this year.

During the past week, a summer season management action reopened subsistence fishing for non-salmon with 4-inch or smaller mesh gillnet gear 24 hours per day, 7 days per week in Subdistrict 5-A, 5-B, and 5-C. Another action reopened subsistence and personal use salmon fishing in District 6 with 6-inch or smaller mesh gillnet gear and fishwheels on a schedule of two, 24-hour periods per week.

### **Fall Season Outlook**

The 2020 fall Chum Salmon preseason projection based on the relationship between summer chum salmon and fall chum salmon is for a run size of less than 450,000 fish. This projection does not meet the threshold of 550,000 fish needed to allow commercial fishing. A run of this size will need subsistence salmon fishing restrictions to meet escapement and treaty objectives.

### **Fall Season Assessment Information**

Through August 7, the Lower Yukon Test Fishery (LYTF) has a cumulative CPUE of 545, near the average of 642. The Mt. Village Test Fishery (MVTF) has a cumulative CPUE of 372, below the average of 819. The cumulative count of fall season Chum Salmon at the Pilot Station sonar was 132,091 through August 7; about half the median on this date of 288,341 fish.

Coho Salmon typically overlap the second half of the fall Chum Salmon run and have just started trickling in. It's too early to assess the strength of the Coho Salmon run.

### **Fall Season Management Actions**

Subsistence salmon fishing in the South Coastal District, the Innoko River, and the Koyukuk River are now on their full regulatory schedules of 24 hour per day, 7 days per week, with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets. Subsistence salmon fishing in Districts 1-4 has been restricted, beginning August 1, to two 18-hour periods per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets to spread the harvest and help get fall Chum Salmon up-river. Given the poor performance to date of the Fall Chum Salmon run, fishing was further restricted by cancellation of one 18-hour period in Districts 1-3, starting August 8. Effective August 11, Subdistricts 5-A, 5-B, and 5-C will transition to fall management and subsistence salmon fishing will be open on a reduced regulatory schedule of two, 24-hour periods per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnet gear and fishwheels. Subdistricts 5-D and 6 will transition to fall management once the Chinook Salmon runs have mostly passed through those districts.

### **Consultation**

Extensive public outreach and consultation was performed during the fall of 2019 and spring of 2020 to inform and seek input from Yukon River fishermen and stakeholders through the various State, Federal, and stakeholder organizations. On May 12, a pre-season planning teleconference lead by YRDFA was held that brought together representatives from most Alaskan Yukon River communities to discuss the run outlook and management options. The thirteenth weekly YRDFA teleconference was held on August 4. Fishermen throughout the lower Yukon River indicated they had mostly stopped fishing for Chinook and summer Chum salmon and shifted to berry picking and other subsistence activities. Mid-river fishermen have also mostly stopped fishing and reported berry picking as poor. Fishing in the upriver districts have been closed and fishermen have been disappointed in the size of the run and quality of the fish. However, several expressed an understanding of the necessity of the closures. Managers will continue to seek input from fishermen through the fall season during the weekly YRDFA teleconferences and other discussions. Assessment project and management updates will continue to be given on the **YRDFA weekly teleconferences each Tuesday at 1:00 pm at the following number: 1-800-315-6338, Passcode: 98566#**. Fishermen are encouraged to continue their participation and the managers thank them for their informative reports to date.

### **KUSKOKWIM RIVER**

**In Season Manager – Boyd Blihovde, Refuge Manager, Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge Contact [Boyd\\_bilhovde@fws.gov](mailto:Boyd_bilhovde@fws.gov); (907) 543-3151 or [Aaron\\_moses@fws.gov](mailto:Aaron_moses@fws.gov)**

#### **Summary:**

The Kuskokwim River main stem currently has no restrictions. All previous restrictions were lifted 11:59 p.m. August 1<sup>st</sup>. Gillnets in tributaries of the Kuskokwim River are still prohibited.

#### **YDNWR fisheries project:**

In the summer of 2020, Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge, Orutsararmiut Native Council (ONC) fisheries staff, and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game collaborated on a Chinook Salmon fecundity project. 51 female Chinook Salmon from the Bethel Test Fishery were sampled for eggs by ONC and USFWS staff during the month of June and July 2020. The objective of the study was to explore the relationship between body size and the number of eggs in Kuskokwim River Chinook Salmon. This project is part of a larger project to understand how the decline in fish sizes may be affecting the number and quality of salmon returning in future runs.

**Escapement:**

As of August 6, 2020. The escapement for Chinook Salmon in the following tributaries:

Salmon River (ANIAK): 1,008 (Average count: 2,547, 5 year average: 1,942)

George River: 2,363 (Average count: 3,360, 5 year average: 3,068)

Krogrukluk River: 4,904 (Average count: 8,505, 5 year average: 7,728)

Takotna River: 213 (Average count: 362)

Salmon River (Pitka Fork): 4,509 (Average count: 6,235)

**Test Fisheries:**

As of August 9, 2020 the CPUE for Chinook at the Bethel test fish is at 488. The 2019 and 2018 Chinook CPUE for this day were at 848 and 663, respectively.

As of August 9, 2020 the CPUE for Chum at the Bethel test fish is at 1,421. The 2019 and 2018 Chum CPUE for this day were at 6,181 and 8,158, respectively.

As of August 9, 2020 the CPUE for Sockeye at the Bethel test fish is at 1,047. The 2019 and 2018 Sockeye CPUE for this day were at 2,666 and 2,261, respectively.

As of August 09, 2020 the CPUE for Coho at the Bethel test fish is at 705. The 2019 and 2018 Sockeye CPUE for this day were at 712 and 456, 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](http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish_shell/upload/Yukon.pdf)

***Federal Subsistence Fisheries Regulations for Kuskokwim Area***

[http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish\\_shell/upload/Kusko.pdf](http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish_shell/upload/Kusko.pdf)

***ADF&G Sport and Personal Use Fishing News Release and Emergency Order link:***

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/EONR/index.cfm?ADFG=region.R3>

***ADF&G Commercial Fisheries News Release and Emergency Order Link:***

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.main>

***Weekly ADF&G Sport Fishing Reports for Interior Alaska:***

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/FishingReports/index.cfm?ADFG=R3.home>

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

## **NORTHWEST ALASKA**

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### **Norton Sound District**

#### **Assessment:**

The ADF&G has shifted to silver salmon management, and the silver numbers have been low so far. Pinks are continuing to pour into Golovin and Nome area rivers. Chum salmon runs were very low compared to the runs of recent years. Sockeye runs were lower than expected, but the run is showing late-season strength at the Pilgrim River weir.

#### ***Other Coastal Waters (Stebbins and St. Michael)***

#### **Subsistence Fishing:**

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

#### ***Subdistricts 6 (Unalakleet)***

#### **Subsistence Fishing:**

Net fishing is open 7 days a week, Gillnet length allowed is 50 fathoms, except in the Unalakleet River only 25 fathoms is allowed. Beach seining is allowed, but all king salmon caught must be returned immediately to the water unharmed.

#### **Commercial Fishing:**

The cumulative catch is 465 kings, 200 sockeyes, 3,300 pinks, 2,400 chums and 300 silvers by 30 permit holders.

Commercial salmon fishing was open Subdistrict for 24 hours from 6 p.m. Saturday, August 1 until 6 p.m. Sunday, August 2. Permit holders were limited to 100 fathoms of gillnet in aggregate length and a mesh size of 6 inches or smaller. Commercial salmon fishing reopened in the Subdistrict for 24 hours from 6 p.m. Saturday, August 8 until 6

p.m. Sunday, August 9. Permit holders are limited to 100 fathoms of gillnet in aggregate length and a mesh size of 6 inches or smaller.

**North River Tower — Camp J. B.** — A NSEDC project. The project has escapement goals of 1,200-2,600 kings, 25,000 pinks, 550-1,100 silvers (aerial survey) and no goal yet established for chums. All counts except silvers should be considered minimal because of the late project start due to high water. Cumulative counts through August 3 were 1,041 kings, 110 sockeyes, 900 chums, 640,000 pinks and 200 silvers.

**Unalakleet River Floating Weir** — The weir was not operated this year because high water prevented installation.

### ***Subdistrict 5 (Shaktoolik)***

#### Subsistence Fishing:

Net fishing is open 7 days a week, Gillnet length allowed is 50 fathoms. Beach seining is allowed but all king salmon caught must be returned immediately to the water unharmed.

#### Commercial Fishing:

The cumulative catch is 230 kings, 270 sockeyes, 1,300 pinks, 3,800 chums and 130 silvers by 29 permit holders.

Commercial salmon fishing was open Subdistrict for 24 hours from 6 p.m. Saturday, August 1 until 6 p.m. Sunday, August 2. Permit holders were limited to 100 fathoms of gillnet in aggregate length and a mesh size of 6 inches or smaller. Commercial salmon fishing reopened in the Subdistrict for 24 hours from 6 p.m. Saturday, August 8 until 6 p.m. Sunday, August 9. Permit holders are limited to 100 fathoms of gillnet in aggregate length and a mesh size of 6 inches or smaller.

**Shaktoolik Sonar/Tower** – An NSEDC project with no escapement goals yet established. All counts except silvers should be considered minimal because of the late project start date due to high water. Cumulative counts through August 3 were 960 kings, 50 sockeyes, 8,200 chums, 1.9 million pinks and 400 silvers.

### ***Subdistrict 4 (Norton Bay)***

#### Subsistence Fishing:

Net fishing is open 7 days a week,

#### Commercial Fishing:

There have been five fishing periods and the catch is confidential because only two permit holders fished.

Commercial salmon fishing was opened for 48 hours from 6 p.m. Friday, July 31 to 6 p.m. Sunday, August 2. Permit holders were limited to 100 fathoms of gillnet in aggregate length and with a mesh size of 6 inches or smaller. Commercial salmon fishing reopened for 48 hours in the Subdistrict from Friday, August 7 at 6 p.m. until Sunday, August 9 at 6 p.m.

**Inglutalik River Tower** — A NSEDC project. Project Started July 30. All counts are minimal and through August 3 were 1,100 chums, 3 sockeyes, 26,000 pinks and 350 silvers.

**Ungalik River Tower** – A NSEDC project. No escapement goals yet established. All counts except silvers should be considered minimal because of the late project start date due to high water. Cumulative counts through August 3 were 135 kings, 220 sockeyes, 7,600 chums, 950,000 pinks and 820 silvers.

### ***Subdistrict 3 (Elim)***

#### Subsistence Fishing:

Net fishing is open 7 days a week,

#### Commercial Fishing:

The cumulative catch is 125 kings, 34 sockeyes, 119 pinks, 700 chums and 30 silvers by 12 permit holders.

Commercial salmon fishing was opened for 48 hours from 6 p.m. Friday, July 31 to 6 p.m. Sunday, August 2. Permit holders were limited to 100 fathoms of gillnet in aggregate length and with a mesh size of 6 inches or smaller. Commercial salmon fishing reopened for 48 hours in the Subdistrict from Friday, August 7 at 6 p.m. until Sunday, August 9 at 6 p.m.

**Kwiniuk River Tower-Camp Joel** – A Fish & Game project. Escapement goals were 250 kings, 9,100 – 32,600 chums, 8,400 pinks and 650-1,300 silvers (aerial survey goal). The cumulative counts through August 3 were 414 kings, 87 sockeyes, 4,800 chums, 1.6 million pinks and 1,000 silvers.

### ***Subdistrict 2 (Golovin)***

#### Subsistence Fishing:

Net fishing is open 7 days a week.

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#### Commercial Fishing:

The cumulative catch is 40 kings, 140 sockeyes, 1,600 pinks, 10,000 chums and 120 silvers by 9 permit holders. The chum catch is near the recent 10-year average but less than half of the last two years.

Commercial salmon fishing was opened for 48 hours from 6 p.m. Friday, July 31 to 9 p.m. Sunday, August 2. Permit holders were limited to 100 fathoms of gillnet in aggregate length and with a mesh size of 6 inches or smaller. Commercial salmon fishing reopened for 48 hours in the Subdistrict from Friday, August 7 at 9 p.m. until Sunday, August 9 at 9 p.m. Permit holders are limited to 100 fathoms of gillnet in aggregate length and a mesh size of 6 inches or smaller.

**Fish River Tower** - A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance from Fish & Game. No escapement goals have been established. The cumulative counts through August 3 were 72 kings, 18 sockeyes, 7,900 chums, 2.4 million pinks and 1,800 silvers. The project started late and there were no counts between July 15 and July 27.

### ***Subdistrict 1 (Nome)***

#### Subsistence Fishing:

The summer subsistence salmon gillnet fishing schedule for the Nome Subdistrict is in effect. The marine waters east of Cape Nome will continue to be open 7 days a 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. Wednesday until 6 p.m. Monday. There are no catch limits when fishing in the marine waters. There are catch limits in the fresh water subsistence areas that vary by river and are shown subsistence fishing permits which are required. Beach seining for salmon is allowed 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 be also be used in the subsistence area whenever gillnet fishing is open.

Effective June 15 all gillnet and beach seine fishing upstream of Boulder Creek on the Sinuk River closed. This closure is in effect to protect migrating sockeye salmon that hold in the Sinuk River bridge area before reaching the spawning grounds.

Stream-specific harvest limits are listed on the subsistence salmon fishing permits. There are no catch limits in marine waters.

#### Commercial Fishing:

The cumulative catch is 32 kings, 230 sockeyes 6,000 chums, 400 pinks and 240 silvers by 6 permit holders. The chum catch is above the recent 5-year average but less than half year's catch.

Commercial salmon fishing was opened for 48 hours from 9 p.m. Friday, July 31 to 9 p.m. Sunday, August 2. Permit holders were limited to 100 fathoms of gillnet in



aggregate length and with a mesh size of 6 inches or smaller. Commercial salmon fishing reopened for 48 hours in the Subdistrict from Friday, August 7 at 9 p.m. until Sunday, August 9 at 9 p.m. Permit holders are limited to 100 fathoms of gillnet in aggregate length and a mesh size of 6 inches or smaller.

**Solomon River Weir** – A Fish & Game project, has no escapement goals yet established. The cumulative counts through August 3 were 3 kings, 49 sockeyes, 640 chums, 400,000 pinks and 60 silvers.

**Bonanza River Weir** – An ADF&G project. . No escapement goals have yet been established. The cumulative counts through July 27 were 15 kings, 27 sockeyes 2,500 chums, 205,000 and 11 silvers. This is the third year of the project.

**Eldorado River Weir** – A NSEDC project has an escapement goal range at the weir of 4,400 – 14, 200 chum salmon. The project is complete. The cumulative counts through August 1 were 21 kings, 74 sockeyes, 11,250 chums, 164,000 pinks and 33 silvers.

**Nome River Weir** – A Fish & Game project with escapement goals of 1,600 – 5,300 chum salmon and 13,000 pink salmon. The cumulative counts through August 3 were 7 kings, 165 sockeyes, 1, 800 chums, 1.8 million pinks and 190 silvers.

**Snake River Weir** – A NSEDC project has an escapement goal of 2,000 – 4,200 chum salmon. The cumulative counts through August 3 were 2 kings, 140 sockeyes, 520 chums, 330,000 pinks and 42 silvers.

## **Port Clarence District**

### Subsistence Fishing:

Subsistence gillnet and beach seining are open 7 days a week. The subsistence king salmon limit is 3 fish per season.

### Commercial Fishing:

Commercial salmon fishing remains closed in the Port Clarence Subdistrict due to lack of buyer interest.

**Pilgrim River Weir** – A NSEDC project. It has an escapement goal of 4,000-8,000 sockeyes based on aerial survey at Salmon Lake & the Grand Central tributary to Salmon Lake. The cumulative counts through August 3 were 54 kings, 10,400 sockeyes, 4,100 chums, 78,000 pinks and 100 silvers. The sockeye counts have picked up again. The department will fly again this week to see if more sockeyes have reached the Salmon Lake and Grand Central River spawning areas. In late July the numbers on the grounds were below expected and likely attributable to subsistence harvest upstream of the weir. At this time the sockeye subsistence limit will remain at 25 fish for the season for each household and give those households that have not reached the limit a chance to get more sockeyes.

## **Kotzebue District**

This year's chum salmon run has been unexpectedly below average, and has been like chum salmon runs throughout western Alaska. This year's Kotzebue commercial catch salmon samples have shown a weak 4-year-old return. The 4-year-old age class would be from the 2016 parent-year and that parent-year was a good run with good escapement.

The department will reduce commercial fishing time to allow more chum salmon to move through the fishing district and into the rivers. Commercial fishing openings are expected to be every other day. The department will compare the Kotzebue commercial catch and the test fish project CPUE with previous years' data to determine if fishing time can be expanded in the Kotzebue commercial fishery later in the week or next week.

### Subsistence Fishing:

No subsistence fishing restrictions are expected in 2020.

### Commercial Fishing:

The commercial catch Friday was 9,437 chum salmon with 44 permit holders fishing. The catch was the highest daily catch of the season.

The cumulative catch is 68,000 chums by 50 permit holders. Compared to the same time last year this year's catch is half of last year's catch with a little more than half the number of permit holders fishing. Scale aging analysis has shown a week return of 4-year-old chum salmon. The department has reduced commercial fishing this week to one third the normal fishing time compared to recent years.

The commercial catch in July was nearly 59,000 chum salmon. The catch was half of last year's July catch of 129,000 chum salmon. Likewise, the average of 21 permit holders fishing daily in July was just over half the average of the 40 permit holders fishing daily last year. The catch per unit of effort (CPUE) in July was the same in both years even though there was less fishing time and fishing effort this year. The CPUE measures the average catch per permit holder per hour.

The department does expect commercial catches to improve into next week based on run timing models of recent years and should slow the second half of August. However, if the chum salmon run falls off early the department will need to continue with limited commercial fishing time to allow sufficient chum salmon passage through the commercial fishing district for upriver subsistence needs and escapement.

Commercial salmon fishing opened in the district for 8 hours on Monday, August 3 from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m.

Commercial salmon fishing reopened opened for 8 hours on Wednesday, August 5, from 12 Noon until 8 p.m. in the Kotzebue District.

Commercial salmon fishing reopened opened for 8 hours on Friday, August 7 from 12 Noon until 8 p.m. in the Kotzebue District.

**Kobuk River Test Fish - Fish & Game project.** The Kobuk River test fish chum salmon catch index at Kiana has started to increase but remains the lowest in the 28-year project history. Test net catches are expected to improve because of the reduced commercial fishing time this past week.

***Federal Subsistence Fisheries Regulations for the Kotzebue Area***  
*<http://alaska.fws.gov/asm/pdf/fishregs11/norton.pdf>*