

**FISHERIES UPDATE FOR THE WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 9-15, 2019.** Report #16  
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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. Please keep in mind, many of the authors do not have alternates or are deployed in the field on occasion and do not have access to communications to submit a weekly report. 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)

Reporting complete for the 2019 season. Please contact author if you have any questions.

**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 -**

**Sitkoh Lake sockeye salmon:** The Sitkoh Lake video weir was installed on July 6 by project personnel from the Forest Service and the Angoon Community Association (ACA). The project uses a pair of remotely monitored video net weirs to count fish entering Sitkoh Lake, on the southeast corner of Chichagof Island. Video from the site is streamed to the ACA office, where it is recorded on a computer. Live video feed and clips from the weir can be accessed over the internet at <http://sitkohlake.ddns.net:81>.

Sockeye are still entering Sitkoh Lake, though at this point it seems unlikely that the final escapement will exceed about 2,000 fish, well below desirable levels. As of September 11, a total of 1,893 sockeye have been counted through the weir. The recent rain will likely bring the few remaining fish into the lake, so the end of the season is in sight. For the past two years, dry weather and low water appear to have contributed to poor escapement to the lake.

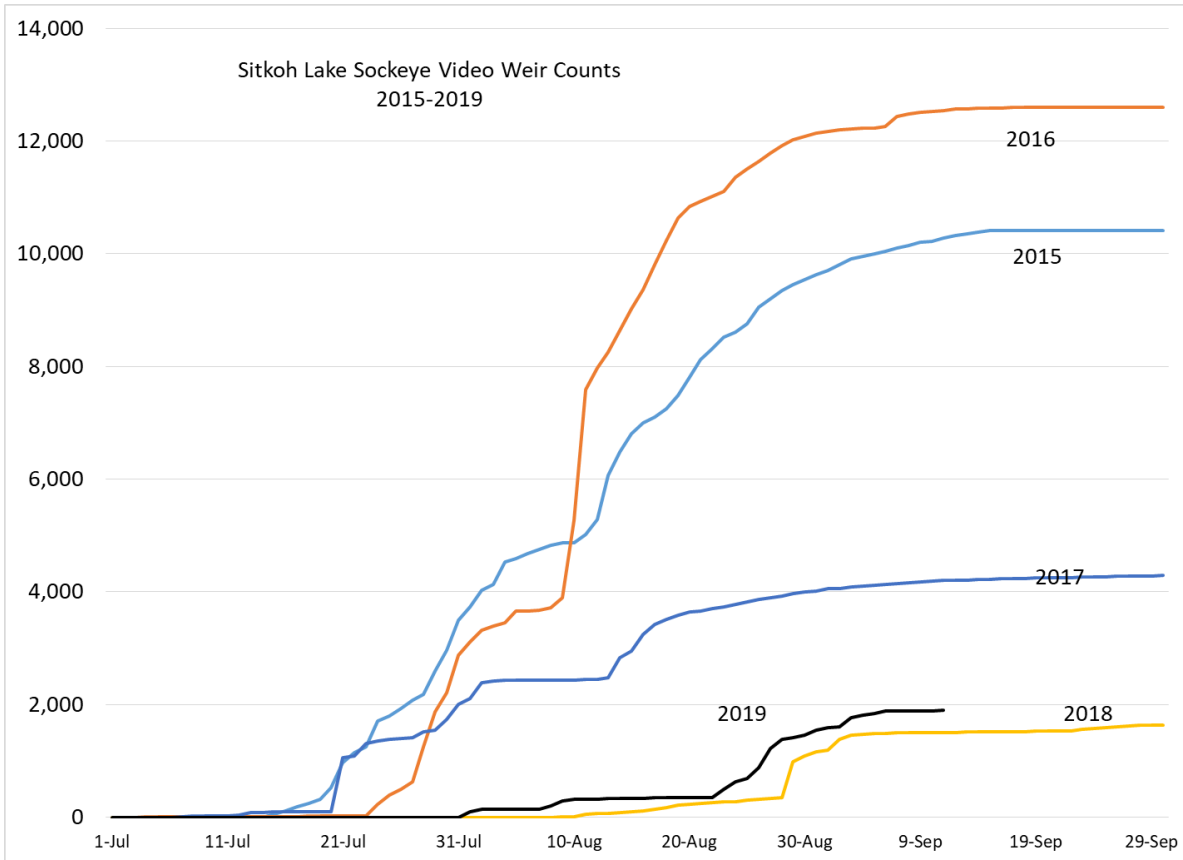


Figure 1. Sitkoh Lake Sockeye video weir counts, 2015-2019.

**Neva Lake sockeye salmon:** A crew from the Forest Service and the Hoonah Indian Association (HIA) installed the Neva Lake weir near Excursion Inlet on June 19. This swim-through video weir is remotely monitored and maintained by a HIA crew living in Excursion Inlet. With the closure of the Ocean Beauty plant in Excursion Inlet, the HIA crew has moved the video recording station to Hoonah, and will monitor the escapement from there for the remainder of the season. The move means that the live video feed is no longer available to the public, unfortunately. As of September 12, a total of 3,564 sockeye have been counted through the weir. As with Sitkoh Lake, we are hoping that the recent rainfall will bring the last stragglers into the lake. Overall, this year’s escapement has been somewhat below average and about a month late compared to historical run timing, due to low water throughout the season.

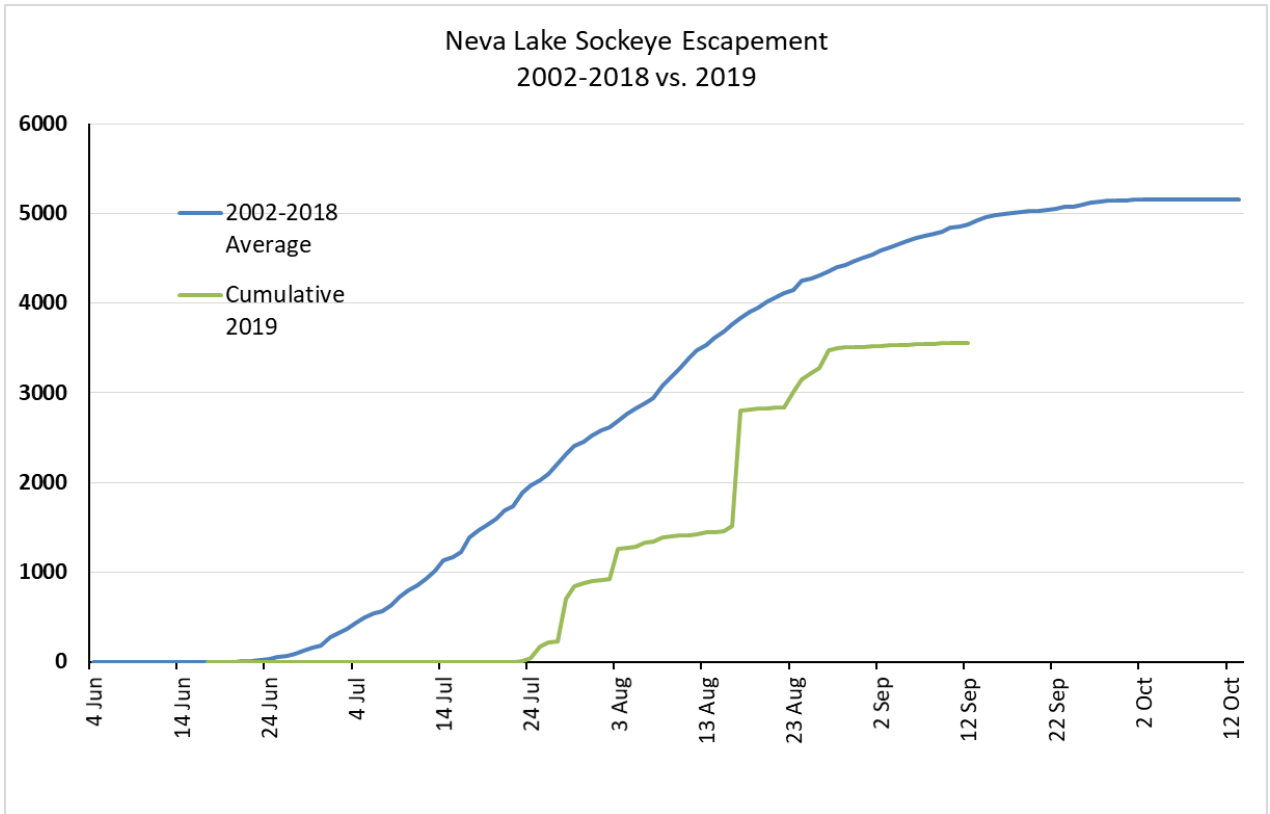


Figure 2. Neva Lake sockeye escapement, 2002-2019.

**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)

Reporting complete for the 2019 season. Please contact author with questions.

**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)

Reporting complete for the 2019 season. Please contact author with questions.

**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, 8/11/2019 Update – Dave Sarafin, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park/Preserve, (907) 822-7281, [dave\\_sarafin@nps.gov](mailto:dave_sarafin@nps.gov)**

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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 In-season Commercial Harvest Estimates  
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareacopperriver.harvestsummary>

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

ADF&G Emergency Orders and News Releases  
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/EONR/index.cfm?ADFG=area.list&Year=2018&AreaID=33>

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

Reporting concluded for 2019 season. Please contact author with questions.

**COOK INLET AREA – Jeff Anderson, Field Supervisor, Kenai Fish and Wildlife Field Office (907) 260-0132 [Jeffry\\_Anderson@fws.gov](mailto:Jeffry_Anderson@fws.gov)**

Reporting completed for 2019 season. Please contact author with questions.

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)

Reporting completed for 2019 season. Please contact authors with questions.

***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***  
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Reporting complete for the 2019 season. Please contact author with questions.

***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.**

[Gerald\\_Maschmann@fws.gov](mailto:Gerald_Maschmann@fws.gov) or

Fred Bue [Fredrick\\_Bue@fws.gov](mailto:Fredrick_Bue@fws.gov)

The Emmonak Field Office is closed for the season. You can contact staff at the Fairbanks Office at 907-456-0406.

**Fall Season Update**

The 2019 Fall Chum Salmon run size is estimated to be near 850,000 fish, after adjusting for the overlap of summer chum salmon into the fall season. A fall chum salmon run size at this level is expected to provide for escapement, subsistence needs, and a limited commercial fishery. The fall season is essentially over in the lower Yukon. The Lower Yukon Test Fishery (LYTF) is nearing the end of fall season operations and is slightly above average through September 10. The Mountain Village Test Fishery (MVTF) will continue operations into the first two weeks of September and through September 12, is above average. The Pilot Station sonar began reporting all chum salmon as Fall Chum Salmon for management purposes on July 19 and has ended operations on August 31. The estimated passage past the sonar through August 31 is 843,464 Chum Salmon, above the median of 718,052. However, genetic analysis of the first fall season strata of 208,000 Chum Salmon shows that it was made up of 88% Summer Chum Salmon. This is the largest proportion of Summer Chum Salmon in the first strata on record since the genetic sampling program began. The second fall season strata of 241,000 Chum Salmon shows that it was made up of 38% Summer Chum Salmon. The third fall season strata of 187,000 Chum Salmon was made up of 11% Summer Chum Salmon. The fourth and final fall strata of 197,799 Chum Salmon was made up of 1% Summer Chum Salmon. Based on average genetic proportions, it appears that the Fall Chum Salmon run could be coming in 5 days later than normal.

The Teedriinjik (Chandalar) River sonar has been in operation since August 8 and has an estimated passage of 56,012 Fall Chum Salmon through September 15, well behind the average of 121,416. However, based on the late entry timing of the Fall Chum Salmon run, this level of passage is not unexpected. Passage estimates began picking up on September 3 and looks similar to the 2018 passage estimates, which was also late and on track to fall within its escapement goal range. The Eagle sonar near the Canadian Border switched over to estimating Fall Chum Salmon on August 15 and has an estimated passage through September 14 of 25,318 Fall Chum Salmon, behind the average of 35,099 Fall Chum Salmon. The typical first quarter point at the Eagle sonar is September 16 and it is still too early to project the total Border passage.

The Coho Salmon run appears to be poor at this time based on the LYTF and MVTF, and slightly below average based on the Pilot Station sonar. However, managers are anticipating the run to be late this season based on the lateness of both the Summer and Fall Chum Salmon runs.

Fall Season management has nearly ended in the lower Yukon and assessment has focused to upriver projects. The Teedriinjik (Chandalar) River is anticipated to continue operations until sometime in the first week of October, weather permitting. The Eagle Sonar is anticipated to continue operations into the third week of October.

### **Fall Season Management Actions**

Subsistence salmon fishing in the Coastal District and District 1-3 is open 7 days per week except for 12 hours before, during, and 12 hours after commercial fishing periods. Managers have adjusted the subsistence salmon fishing closures around commercial fishing periods to accommodate short notice openings, as per regulation. However, at this time it appears that the fall commercial activities are done for the season. Subsistence salmon fishing in Districts 4 and 5 have been relaxed to 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.

Thirteen fall season commercial periods have occurred in District 1, and twelve have occurred in District 2. Preliminary harvests estimates are 253,897 Chum Salmon, 56,245 Coho Salmon, and 544 Chinook Salmon. Commercial fishing for the fall season has begun in Subdistricts 5-B and 5-C where 900 Fall Chum Salmon have been harvested in the first period. District 6 is open to commercial fishing. 120 Fall Chum Salmon and 10 Coho Salmon have been harvested at this time.

### **Consultation**

Extensive public outreach and consultation was performed during the fall of 2018 and spring of 2019 to inform and seek input from Yukon River fishermen and stakeholders. Outreach has continued through the summer via the YR DFA weekly teleconferences. The thirteenth and final teleconference occurred on August 27. Fishermen in the lower Yukon are mostly done with Fall Chum Salmon harvests and are transitioning to other fall season subsistence activities. Fishermen in the middle Yukon are finishing up their subsistence fishing activities for the season, while upper Yukon fishermen are just getting started.

### **KUSKOKWIM RIVER**

**In Season Manager – Vernon “Ray” Born, Refuge Manager, Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge Contact [Vernon\\_Born@fws.gov](mailto:Vernon_Born@fws.gov) (907) 543-3151 or [Lewis\\_Coggins@fws.gov](mailto:Lewis_Coggins@fws.gov)**

Reporting complete for 2019 season. Please contact author if you have questions.

### **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)

***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](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 – Ken Adkisson, National Park Service, Nome.**  
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**Reporting for the 2019 season complete. Please contact author with questions.**

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