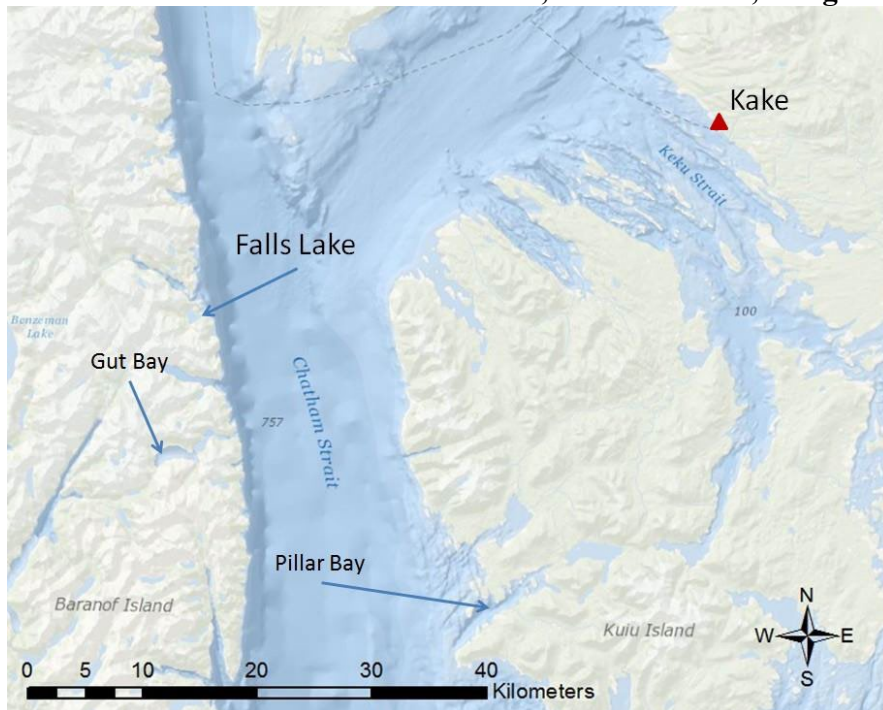


**FISHERIES UPDATE FOR THE WEEK OF JULY 20 - 26, 2020.** Report #9  
 Compiled by George Pappas - (907) 786-3822, [George\\_Pappas@fws.gov](mailto:George_Pappas@fws.gov) Office of  
 Subsistence Management, USFWS.

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**



**Figure 5.** Location of Gut Bay in relation to Fall 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 pre-season terminal run forecast for large Chinook Salmon in the Stikine River is 13,350 fish. This forecast is below the bottom range of the 14,000 to 28,000 fish goal. Directed commercial, sport, and subsistence fisheries in the area have been closed to

protect this return. There is a restricted commercial drift gillnet opportunity in District 6 from 12:01 p.m., Sunday, July 19, through 12:00 noon, Tuesday, July 21, 2020. The District 6 and District 8 commercial drift gillnet fisheries are closed in response to low in-season model projections for Stikine River Mainstem Sockeye Salmon.

The 2020 pre-season Sockeye Salmon forecast is 103,400 fish, with 64,500 Tahltan and 38,900 Mainstem fish. The 2019 Sockeye Salmon forecast was 90,000 fish, which included 66,000 Tahltan Lake and 24,000 Mainstem Sockeye. The escapement objective for Tahltan bound Sockeye Salmon is 18,000 and 30,000 for Mainstem fish. The low Mainstem return resulted in an in-season closure of the 2019 Federal subsistence Sockeye Salmon fishery on July 22, 2019. The 2020 pre-season forecast is above the escapement objectives, but low harvest in and out of the river has resulted in low in-season model escapement projections for mainstem Sockeye Salmon.

The 2020 Federal Stikine River Chinook subsistence fishery was closed by the in-season manager. The Federal Stikine River Sockeye Salmon subsistence fishery began Sunday, June 21. Despite the river being high, the participation in the fishery has been high this week and harvest is steadily increasing. A phone survey of Stikine River salmon harvesters resulted in a cumulative harvest estimate of 1002 Sockeye Salmon (stat week 29) although the harvest is likely higher. A total of 127 Stikine River Federal subsistence salmon permits (FFSE07) and 34 General Fish permits (FFSE04) have been issued for residents in the Wrangell and Petersburg Districts.

Southeast Alaska Drift Gillnet Harvest Estimates as of Statistical Week 28 (July 5 through July 11)

District	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	Total
6	150	2,100	1,500	4,100	9,300	17,150
8	1,100	600	20	250	1,900	3,870

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

No new report for this week, Author deployed.

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.

There has been a welcome push of new fish into Neva Lake over the past week, with almost 400 sockeye on July 15. The total now stands at 552 sockeye as of July 16, with about a quarter of the historical run timing elapsed.



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



*Figure 2. Video capture of a sockeye passing through the Neva Lake weir, July 20, 2020*



*Figure 3. A moose strolls past the mountaintop repeater for the Neva Lake weir, July 8, 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 4 and 5). 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> .

No counts are available from the weir yet, but there appeared to be a healthy push of fish over the weekend. Last year at this time, we were still awaiting the first sockeye, which were delayed by low stream flows. That hasn't been a problem this year.



*Figure 4. The video weir at the outlet of Sitkoh Lake, July 9, 2020.*



*Figure 5. Video capture of a sockeye swimming through a video chute at the Sitkoh Lake weir, July 19, 2020.*

Northern Inside waters: Salmon returns throughout the northern inside water range from bad to worse. Hatchery chum catches have been poor, raising concerns about DIPAC being able to meet broodstock needs. Counts of sockeye at the Chilkoot and Chilkat weirs near Haines have been substantially below average, and catches of sockeye in Taku area gillnet fisheries have been poor, despite improved numbers at the fishwheels upriver. As expected, returns of pink salmon also appear to be weak throughout the region. Recent test fisheries at Hawk Inlet and Point Gardner that were not quite as dismal as previous weeks were the closest thing to a bright spot in recent indicators. Subsistence fishers are encouraged to report observations of abundance at subsistence fishing sites to help biologists monitor this year's returns.

Yakutat area: Things have been looking a little bit better in the Yakutat area. Counts of sockeye through the Situk weir are now up to 42,239 as of July 18, which is within the escapement goal of 30,000-70,000 sockeye. Also welcome is the count of Chinook, which is just a few fish shy of 1,000 as of July 18, approaching the upper end of the escapement goal of 450-1,050 large fish. As a result of the improved Chinook return, ADF&G has opened the subsistence fishery to the retention of Chinook. However, the Situk river mouth area is still closed to subsistence fishing, and gillnets must be attended at all times when fishing in the Situk River.

**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 154 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. Many local subsistence users continue to utilize these liberalized harvest regulations.

Although a couple of Prince of Wales Island streams have June returns of Sockeye Salmon, most subsistence users are in preparation for subsistence harvest in July. State managed subsistence fisheries are currently open at Klawock Inlet, Sarkar, Red Bay, Salmon Bay Lake, Karta River, Hetta Inlet, Eek Lake, Hunter Bay, Klakas Inlet and Shipley Bay. Personal use opportunity is open at the Thorne River and Kegan Cove. All fisheries, except Hetta (August 31) and Klawock (August 7) will close on July 31. 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: 12,875 Chinook Salmon, 26,900 Sockeye Salmon, 15,900 Coho Salmon, 843,650 Pink Salmon and 252,800 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 514 Sockeye Salmon to date. The Eek Lake weir became operational on June 15 and has passed 6 Sockeye Salmon to date.

### **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, 7/20/2020 Update – Dave Sarafin, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve (WRST), (907) 205-0544, [dave\\_sarafin@nps.gov](mailto:dave_sarafin@nps.gov)**

The commercial fishery in the Copper River District has been 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) began recording salmon passage on May 19. As of July 26, 527,588 salmon have been estimated migrating upstream for the season. This estimate is 86% of the cumulative management objective of 615,502 salmon for this date. A daily estimate of 596 salmon migrated by the sonar on July 26. 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 through July 22, of which, 119 were recaptured fish that had been tagged at the downstream wheels.

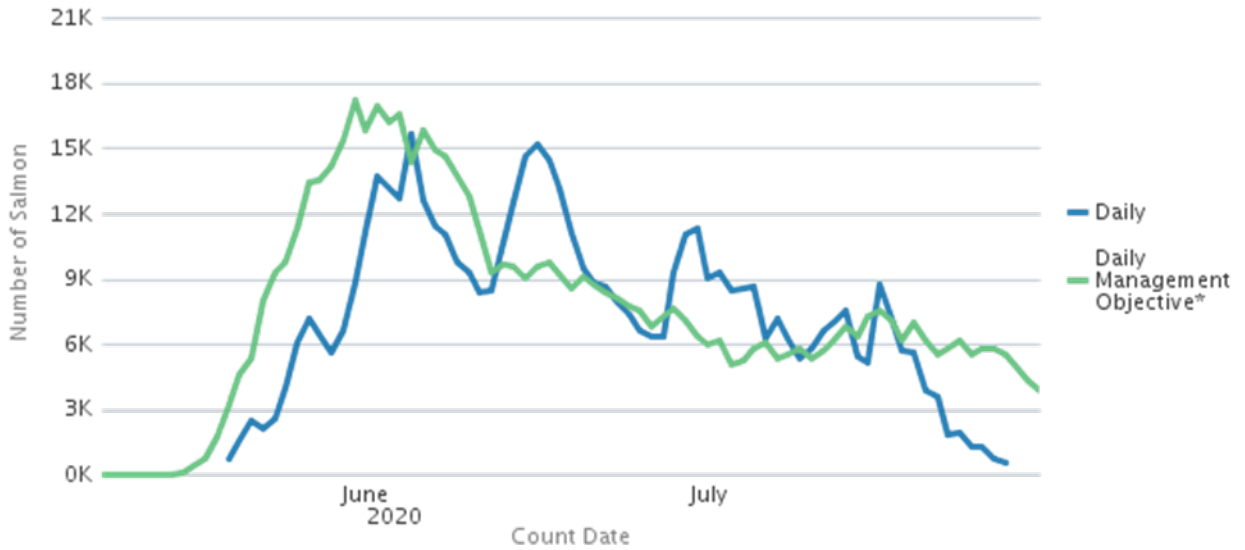
Performance in the commercial fishery and in-river sonar salmon passage estimates are the primary in-season assessments of the salmon return to the Copper River. The overall returns of both Sockeye and Chinook Salmon have been weak. In-river assessments of the Chinook Salmon return, along with assumptions 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, given the recent declines observed in sonar passage estimates, 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. Federal managers 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.



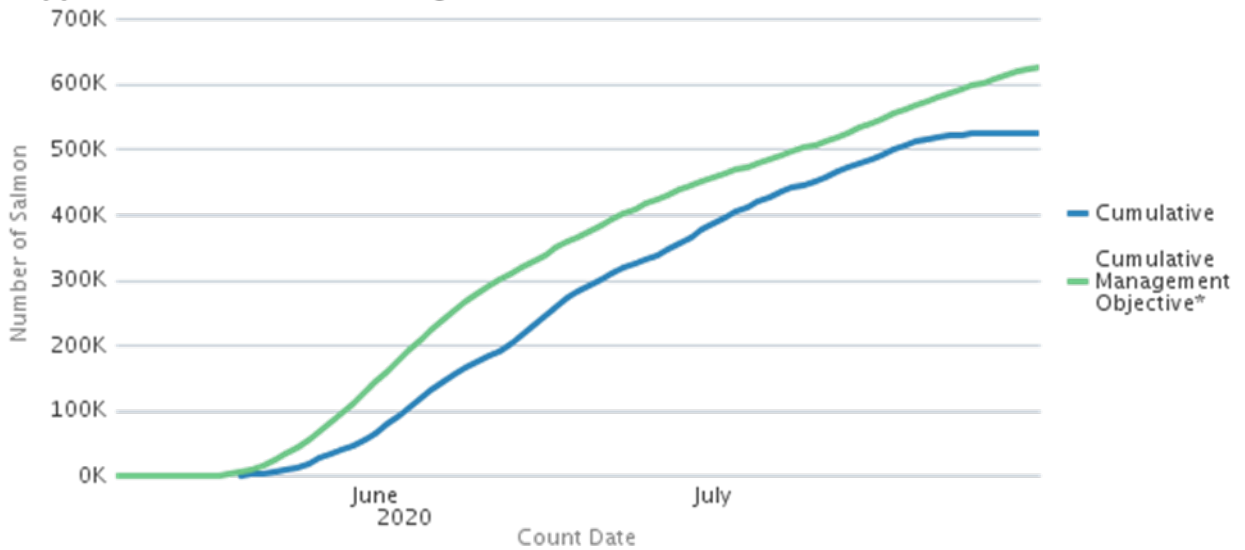
The State subsistence fishery in the Glennallen Subdistrict opened on June 1. Effective 12:01 a.m. Saturday June 20, the State sport fishery annual limit was reduced from 4 to 1 Chinook salmon for the Upper Copper River drainage. Since June 22, the Chitina personal use fishery has been closed to the retention of Chinook salmon for the remainder of the season. The personal use fishery in the Chitina Subdistrict was open for 84-hours from July 24 through July 26, and is scheduled to remain closed from July 27 through August 2; ADFG has also advised that the personal use fishery likely to remain closed for the remainder of the season to conserve Sockeye Salmon for escapement.

**2020 Upper Copper River Salmon Passage at Miles Lake Sonar through July 26**

**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)

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 six (206) Chitina Subdistrict permits, three hundred and sixty-four (364) Glennallen Subdistrict permits, and one (1) Batzulnetas area permits have been issued to date. With the park offices and visitor contact stations closed to the public through the end of June due to public health advisories and staffing delays related to COVID-19, and limited visitor service availability starting July 1, the permitting process has been adapted to ensure the safety of permit applicants and park staff.

The ADFG counting tower in the Gulkana River began operation on June 2. The reported cumulative passage estimate through July 26 is 2,106 Chinook Salmon. This is approximately 27% of the 2019 season count of 7,770 through this date of the season; however, periods of high water and associated turbidity limited counts on some days of the 2020 season.

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. 6 June 2017.** (907) 424-4759 [mburcham@fs.fed.us](mailto:mburcham@fs.fed.us)

A total of 41 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 July 25 in the dip net fishery at Russian River Falls is 727 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 Kenai 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 during this reporting period totals 52 sockeye salmon.

Emergency Special Action 10-KS-01-20 expired on July 15. This action closed the Federal subsistence rod and reel fishery for early-run Chinook Salmon in the Kenai River downstream from the outlet of Skilak Lake.

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)

The Sockeye Salmon returns to the Kodiak archipelago continues to be strong, with most systems meeting their lower escapement goals.

The Sockeye Salmon escapement into the Buskin River continues to be medium in strength. As of July 23, 2020, a total of 7,024 fish have migrated past the ADF&G weir.

Sockeye salmon escapement to the Litnik River on Afognak Island had a slow start but improved over the past couple of weeks and is now slowing down. As of July 23, 2020, a total of 24,263 fish have passed through the weir.

The Karluk River late Sockeye Salmon escapement is below the 10 year average, with a total of 1,480 fish passing through the weir as of July 23, 2020. Subsistence users from Karluk village and Larsen Bay have met their needs. Due to the high sockeye salmon

harvest numbers, villagers are able to share their catch with others and have been hard at work smoking their catch.

Chinook returns to the Karluk and Ayakulik Rivers are nearly complete, and have not met their respective lower escapement goal of 3,000 and 4,800 fish, respectively. As of July 23, 2020, a total of 2,920 Chinook salmon has passed the Karluk River weir. As of July 23, 2020, a total of 2,347 fish passed the Ayakulik River weir.

***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  
 (907) 271-2776 Jonathon\_Gerken@fws.gov**

***BRISTOL BAY, CHIGNIK, ALASKA PENINSULA, and ALEUTIAN ISLANDS –  
 Jonathon Gerken Fisheries Branch Chief Anchorage Fish and Wildlife Field Office***

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 July 26):

Kvichak	SEG = 2,000,000 – 10,000,000, current escapement = 4,000,710
Alagnak	SEG = 320,000 minimum, current escapement = 2,313,726
Naknek	SEG = 800,000 – 2,000,000, current escapement = 4,112,160
Egegik	SEG = 800,000 – 2,000,000, current escapement = 2,383,698
Ugashik	SEG = 500,000 – 1,400,000, current escapement = 1,527,900
Wood River	SEG = 700,000 – 1,800,000, current escapement = 2,232,684
Igushik	SEG = 150,000 – 400,000, current escapement = 307,308

Nushagak SEG = 370,000 – 900,000, current escapement = 1,220,823  
 Nushagak (Chinook) SEG = 55,000 – 270,000, current escapement = 42,721  
 Togiak SEG = 150,000 – 270,000, current escapement = 123,990

All areas will provide subsistence harvest opportunity.

The total commercial harvest for Sockeye Salmon as of July 26 is approximately 38 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 July 26, approximately 137,500 early run Sockeye Salmon have been enumerated. This count is significantly smaller than the escapement objective for this time period of 350,000 - 448,000 fish and it is highly unlikely the run will make the minimum escapement goal. Emergency Special Action #08-SS-01-20, restricting fishing in federal public waters to only federally qualified users is still in place through July 31. Inseason genetics for the Sockeye Salmon run indicated 26% of fish enumerated were early-run fish on July 23.

Subsistence harvest reports indicate minimal harvests.

The late run Sockeye Salmon count for July 26 is 85,046 fish. The escapement objective for this time period is 110,000 – 200,000 fish. There is concern that the late run will be not make the lower end of the escapement goal.

The Chinook Salmon count for July 19 is 929 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. 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.

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: There are only two preseason forecasts for this area, the Nelson River and late-run (post July 31) Bear Lake stocks. The 2020 Sockeye Salmon run size projections are 362,000 fish for the Nelson River and 408,000 fish for late-run Bear Lake. Commercial fishing in some fishing districts located on the Northern Peninsula Management Area were announced beginning July 9. The cumulative commercial harvest as of July 26 is approximately 1.4 million fish with Sockeye Salmon being the predominant species harvested.

North Peninsula Management Area Escapement Goals (current Sockeye Salmon escapement for July 19):

Nelson River	BEG = 97,000 – 219,000, current escapement = 162,164
Late-run Bear Lake	BEG = 117,000 – 195,000, current escapement = 280,234 (pre July 31 count)

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 July 26 is approximately 3.4 million with pink salmon being the predominant species harvested.

South Peninsula Management Area Escapement Counts (current Sockeye Salmon escapement for July 26):

Ilnik River current escapement = 40,019  
 Orzinski River current escapement = 4,507  
 Sandy River current escapement = 55,898  
 McLees River current escapement = 4,807 – McLees River counts are lower than the 2017 to 2011 average of 21,393 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 river and management has shifted to the fall season. During the past week, summer season management focused on allowing the remaining upper river districts and subdistricts limited Chinook Salmon harvest opportunity, proportional to that provided in the lower districts. Daily passage numbers are being closely monitored at the Eagle sonar and the Chena River sonar and counting tower, these being the only remaining assessment points for Chinook Salmon. A portion of the summer Chum Salmon returning to the Tanana River drainage will also be counted at the Chena River project. With the shift at Pilot Station sonar to counting all Chum Salmon as fall run fish, the only remaining indicator of summer Chum Salmon run strength is from genetic analysis of samples collected there.

Subsistence fishers in the Lower Yukon Districts 1-3 have finished harvesting Chinook and summer Chum salmon. Harvest reports during the past week from Districts 4-6 were mixed, with a number of people reporting good catches of high quality Chinook Salmon and others, mostly in District 5, reporting low catches and presence of disease in the fish. However, the last 3 pulses comprising a third or more of the total run should still be passing through this large district.

**Summer Season Assessment Information**

As of July 26, the cumulative passage of Chinook Salmon past the Pilot Station sonar was 159,593, compared with the average cumulative passage of 182,045 at this date. A total of 13,779 Chinook salmon have been counted at the Eagle sonar project through July 26, compared with median passage of 32,799. Border passage projections based on Eagle sonar are considerably lower, at this point, than the earlier projects based on the Canadian component of the run past Pilot Station sonar. Chena River sonar counts have not been updated since the beginning of the week. High water has prevented both visual species ID and sonar operation so far this season. According to genetic analysis of the most recent Chum Salmon samples collected at Pilot Station sonar July 10-18, 97.8% are still summer Chum Salmon.

**Summer Season Management Actions**

The lower Yukon River districts transitioned to fall season management on July 21. In the upper Yukon River, no changes were made to the schedules and gear restrictions laid out in the previous week. In Subdistrict 5D, a reduced, 48-hour period in the lower and middle portions ended on July 19, and a similar 48-hour period in the upper portion ended on July 26. Fishing is restricted to 6-inch mesh throughout District 5. District 6 in the Tanana River remained restricted to selective gear with no retention of Chinook Salmon, due to low counts so far in the Chena River.

**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. The run will be monitored inseason to determine if any adjustments to the subsistence fishing schedule are needed to meet escapement and treaty objectives.

**Fall Season Assessment Information**

The cumulative count of Chum Salmon at Pilot Station sonar, a mix of summer and fall run fish which are counted as fall Chum Salmon, was 63,845 on July 26; about half the median on this date of 121,036. No Coho Salmon have been counted yet at the Pilot Station sonar, and as of July 23, none had been caught in test fisheries below Pilot Station. Test fishery catches have not been updated since July 23.

**Fall Season Management Actions**

The South Coastal District and Districts 1-3 remain on their full regulatory schedules and 7.5" gillnet mesh size allowed. District 4 and Innoko and Koyukuk rivers are also now on full regulatory schedules with 7.5" mesh. Districts 5 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 YR DFA was held that brought together



representatives from most Alaskan Yukon River communities to discuss the run outlook and management options. The tenth regular weekly YR DFA teleconference was held on July 21. Fishermen throughout the lower Yukon River indicated they had mostly stopped fishing for Chinook and summer Chum salmon and satisfied their subsistence needs although catches were often lower than desired. Upriver, fishermen reported better catches, and those farther upriver were expecting to do better in their remaining periods, with better river conditions and more fish in their areas. Managers will continue to seek input from fishermen through the fall season during the weekly YR DFA teleconferences and other discussions. Assessment project and management updates will continue to be given on the **YR DFA 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 – Vernon “Ray” Born, Refuge Manager, Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge Contact [Vernon\\_Born@fws.gov](mailto:Vernon_Born@fws.gov) (907) 543-3151 or Aaron Mosses [Aaron\\_Moses@fws.gov](mailto:Aaron_Moses@fws.gov) (907) 545-3252**

#### **Summary:**

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game’s management actions for the Kuskokwim River until further notice:

- 6-inch or less mesh for subsistence gillnets;
- 25 fathom gillnet length restriction from the mouth of the Johnson River upstream to the headwaters of the Kuskokwim River (Sections 2–5);
- 50 Fathom gill net restriction below Johnson River.
- Dip nets for the taking of salmon; and
- Closed waters within Old Kuskokuak sloughs and around the mouth of the Aniak River.

Subsistence fishing with gillnets will remain closed in the following tributaries:

- The Kwethluk River drainage to its confluence with Kuskokuak Slough.
- The Kasigluk and Kisaralik river drainages to their confluences with Old Kuskokuak Slough.
- The Tuluksak River drainage including its confluence with the Kuskokwim River and downstream approximately 1-mile to ADF&G regulatory markers.
- The Aniak River drainage to ADF&G regulatory markers at its confluence with the Kuskokwim River

**Test Fisheries:**

As of July 26, the cumulative catch per unit of effort (CPUE) of Chinook Salmon at the Alaska Department of Fish and Game's Bethel Test Fishery is 480. Cumulative CPUE on this date during 2019 and 2018 were 843 and 657, respectively.

Cumulative CPUE for Chum Salmon is at 1,284. Cumulative CPUE on this date during 2019 and 2018 were 5,302 and 7,722 respectively.

Cumulative CPUE for Sockeye is at 1,013. Cumulative CPUE on this date during 2019 and 2018 were 2,468 and 2,057, respectively.

Cumulative CPUE for Coho is at 49. Cumulative CPUE on this date during 2019 and 2018 were 84 and 30, 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****Ken Adkisson, National Park Service, Nome.**(907) 443-6104 [Ken\\_Adkisson@nps.gov](mailto:Ken_Adkisson@nps.gov)**Assessment:**

The Salmon runs have been a mixed bag of good and bad news. The good news were the king and pink salmon runs. The not so good news are the sockeye and chum salmon. Waiting in the wings are silvers that are giving an early sneak peek. The sockeyes came in lower than expected but have been steadily passing Pilgrim River, and at the halfway point, projections show the low end of escapement goal being met. Chums have been even lower than expected, but with greatly reduced commercial fishing time this year some of the goals may be reached.

**Norton Sound District*****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)*****Federal Regulation:**

By federal regulation, the 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.

**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 460 kings, 55 sockeyes, 3,300 pinks and 2,000 chums by 20 permit holders. The chum catch has been poor.

Commercial salmon fishing reopened in the Subdistrict for 24 hours from 6 p.m. Saturday, July 25 until 6 p.m. Sunday, July 26. Permit holders are limited to 100 fathoms of gillnet in aggregate length and gillnets must have a mesh size of 6 inches or smaller. This fishing

period will test early silver run strength. On July 25, the department will shift to silver salmon management in the Subdistrict.

**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 should be considered minimal because of the late start due to high water. Cumulative counts through July 19 were 609 kings, 27 sockeyes, 693 chums and 500,000 pinks. The historical average 90 percent point of king at the tower is July 25.

**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 228 kings, 150 sockeyes, 1,300 pinks and 3,400 chums by 15 permit holders. The chum catch has been poor.

Commercial salmon fishing in the Subdistrict reopened for 24 hours from 6 p.m. Friday, July 25 until 6 p.m. Sunday, July 26. Permit holders are limited to 100 fathoms of gillnet in aggregate length and gillnets must have a mesh size of 6 inches or smaller. This fishing period will test early silver run strength. On July 25, the department will shift to silver salmon management in the Subdistrict.

**Shaktoolik Sonar/Tower** – An NSEDC project with no escapement goals yet established. All counts should be considered minimal because of the late start date due to high water. Cumulative counts through July 19 were 732 kings, 30 sockeyes, 5,300 chums, 1.6 million pinks and 6 silvers.

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

#### Subsistence Fishing:

Net fishing is open 7 days a week,

#### Commercial Fishing:

There were four fishing periods and the catch is confidential because only two permit holders fished.

Commercial salmon fishing was opened for 12 hours from 8 a.m. until 8 p.m. Wednesday, July 22 in the Subdistrict. Permit holders were limited to 100 fathoms of gillnet in aggregate length and gillnets must have a mesh size of 4 ½ inches or smaller. The 12-hour fishing period with gillnet mesh size 4 ½ inches or smaller is to target the more abundant pink salmon.

**Ungalik River Tower** – A NSEDC project. No escapement goals yet established. All counts should be considered minimal because of the late start date due to high water. Cumulative counts through July 19 were 140 kings, 220 sockeyes, 6,500 chums, 610,000 pinks and 39 silvers.

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

#### Subsistence Fishing:

Net fishing is open 7 days a week,

#### Commercial Fishing:

The cumulative catch is 125 kings, 1 sockeye, 119 pinks and 673 chums by 10 permit holders. The chum catch has been poor.

Commercial salmon fishing was opened for 12 hours from 8 a.m. until 8 p.m. Wednesday, July 22 in the Subdistrict. Permit holders were limited to 100 fathoms of gillnet in aggregate length and gillnets must have a mesh size of 4 ½ inches or smaller. The 12-hour fishing period with gillnet mesh size 4 ½ inches or smaller is to target the more abundant pink salmon.

**Kwiniuk River Tower-Camp Joel** – A Fish & Game project. Escapement goals are 250 kings, 9,100 – 32,600 chums, 8,400 pinks and 650-1,300 silvers (aerial survey goal). The cumulative counts through July 19 were 378 kings, 4,250 chums, 78 sockeyes and 1.2 million pinks. The historical average 95% point of chum passage at the tower July 27. This is the first time the chum goal was not reached since 2016.

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

#### Subsistence Fishing:

Net fishing is open 7 days a week.

#### Commercial Fishing:

The cumulative catch is 371 kings, 86 sockeyes, 1,600 pinks, 9,100 chums and one silver by 9 permit holders. The chum catch was average for the recent fishing period.

The Golovin Subdistrict reopened to commercial salmon fishing for 48 hours from 6 p.m. Friday, July 24 until 6 p.m. Sunday, July 26. Permit holders were limited to 100 fathoms of gillnet in aggregate length and gillnets must have 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. Because of high water, the project was knocked out in late June and began counting again on July 12. The cumulative counts through July 15 were 12 kings, 18 sockeyes, 5,000 chums and 1.4 million pinks. The project has been suspended because of staffing issues.

### ***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 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 27 kings, 60 sockeyes, 3,100 chums, 16 pinks and 3 silvers by 4 permit holders. The chum catch was average for the recent fishing period.

The Nome Subdistrict reopened to commercial salmon fishing for 48 hours from 9 p.m. Friday, July 24 until 9 p.m. Sunday, July 26. Permit holders are limited to 100 fathoms of gillnet in aggregate length and gillnets must have 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 July 19 were 19 sockeyes, 226 chums, 185,500 pinks and 11 silvers. The historical average third quarter point of the chum passage at the weir is July 28.

**Bonanza River Weir** – An ADF&G project. No escapement goals have yet been established. The cumulative counts through July 19 are 15 kings, 1 sockeye, 1,600 chums and 140,000 pinks. 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 cumulative counts through July 19 are 18 kings, 22

sockeyes, 7,500 chums and 110,000 pinks. The historic average 90% point of the chum run at the weir is July 25.

**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 July 19 are 5 kings, 120 sockeyes, 800 chums, 840,000 pinks and 19 silvers. The historic average midpoint of chum and pink passage is July 22.

**Snake River Weir** – A NSEDC project has an escapement goal of 2,000 – 4,200 chum salmon. The cumulative counts through July 19 are 58 sockeyes, 218 chums and 140,000 pinks. The historic average third quarter point of chum passage at the weir is July 27.

### **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 July 19 were 31 kings, 4,617 sockeyes, 1,500 chums and 6,500 pinks. The historical average midpoint of sockeye passage at the weir is July 19, and the 5 percent is July 28.

### **Kotzebue District.**

The ADF&G reminded both subsistence and commercial fishermen that the area offshore of the Kotzebue airport's main runway to one nautical mile out in the ocean is closed to all commercial and subsistence fishing. Fishing boats and other marine vessels may still transit through the closed fishing area, but no fishing gear can be in the water in the closed area.

The reason for the closure is that fishing often attracts birds that can create a hazardous situation for aircraft. This fishing closure is in effect for both commercial and subsistence fishing and will remain in effect until mid-October.

The closed area is a rectangular area defined from the Weather Service Dome, south of the main runway at the Kotzebue airport, to the NANA building north of the same runway and extending westerly one nautical mile out into the ocean approximately perpendicular to the beach.

### Subsistence Fishing:

No subsistence fishing restrictions are expected in 2020.

### Commercial Fishing:

Commercial salmon fishing was open in the District for 10 hours daily from 8 a.m. until 6 p.m. from Sunday, July 19 through Friday, July 24 in the Kotzebue District.

Through the first two weeks of fishing, the commercial catch was 28,270 chums. This past week the daily average number of permit holders fishing was 24 compared to 41 permit holders fishing the same time last year. The catch this past week was 20,145 chums compared to 35,055 chums during the same week last year. However, with the reduced fishing effort and fishing 2 hours less daily this year the catch per unit of effort (CPUE) has been well above last year's CPUE for the past week. The CPUE measures the average catch per permit holder per hour.

This year's chum salmon run has been weak and has been like runs throughout western Alaska. Therefore, the department will stay with the reduced fishing hours when compared to recent years.

Commercial salmon fishing is scheduled to reopen next week for 10 hours daily from 8 a.m. until 6 p.m. from Sunday, July 26 through Friday, July 31 in the Kotzebue District.

### **Kobuk River Test Fish - Fish & Game project.**

The Kobuk River test fish crew from Kiana began fishing Friday, July 23. After next week's fishing periods, the department will compare the Kotzebue commercial catch and the CPUE from the test fish project with previous years' data to determine if fishing time can be continued or expanded in the Kotzebue commercial fishery.

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