

FISHERIES UPDATE FOR THE WEEK OF AUGUST 5 – 11, 2018.

Report #11 - Compiled by George Pappas - (907) 786-3822, 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 jpkoller@fs.fed.us

Falls Lake Sockeye Salmon - The Forest Service and the Organized Village of Kake operate the Falls Lake trap and video net weir which were installed June 29. As of August 12, 539 Sockeye Salmon have been counted at the trap and 700 have been harvested in the subsistence fishery. Escapement through the net weir, which attempts to account for all fish entering the lake, is about 1,200. On average, 89% of the run has entered the lake by August 13. The final escapement estimate in 2017 was 4,662 Sockeye Salmon while the final subsistence and sport harvest in the marine terminal area was 732. Subsistence harvest accounted for 89% of terminal area harvest.

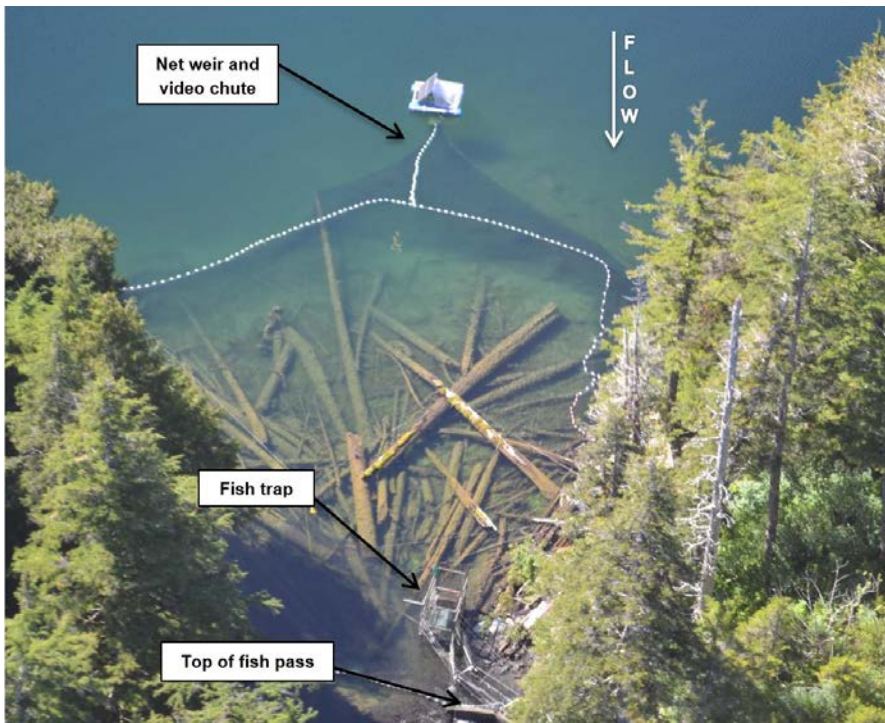


Figure 1. Aerial photo of the Falls Lake outlet illustrating the typical location of weir equipment.

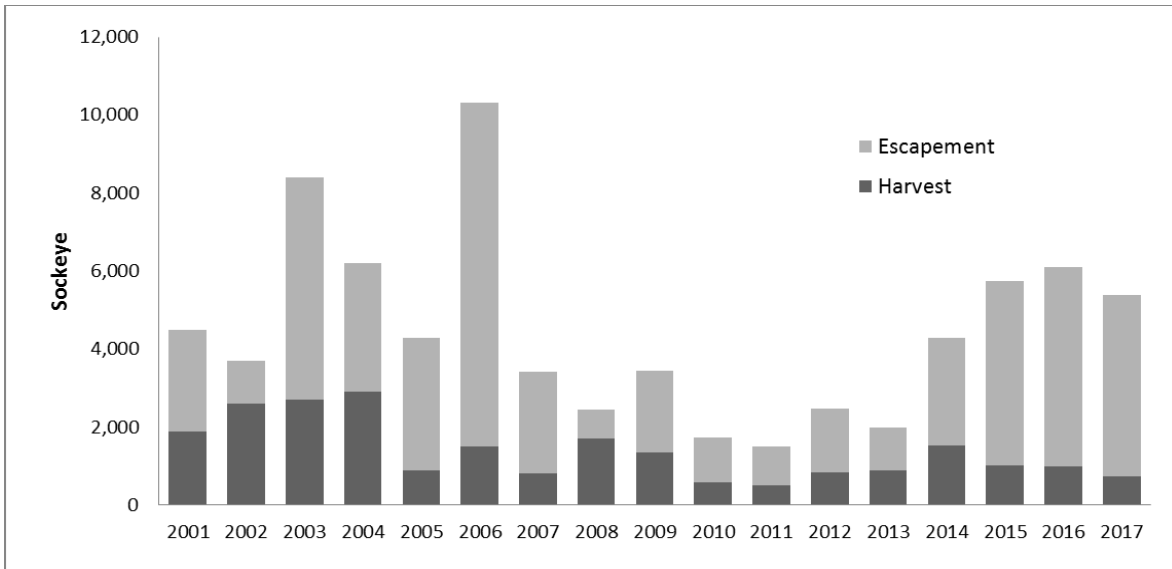


Figure 2. Escapement plus harvest equals total terminal run of Sockeye Salmon at Falls Lake, 2001-2017.

Klag Bay Sockeye Salmon - The Sitka Tribe of Alaska operates the Sockeye Salmon monitoring weir at Klag Bay, which was operating as of June 28. As of August 12, 1,475 Sockeye Salmon have been counted at the weir and 880 have been harvested in the subsistence fishery. On average, 55% of the run has entered the lake by August 12. In 2017, approximately 3,898 migrated past the weir while an estimated 1,087 were harvested in the marine terminal area subsistence and sport fisheries. Subsistence harvest accounted for over 99% of terminal area harvest.

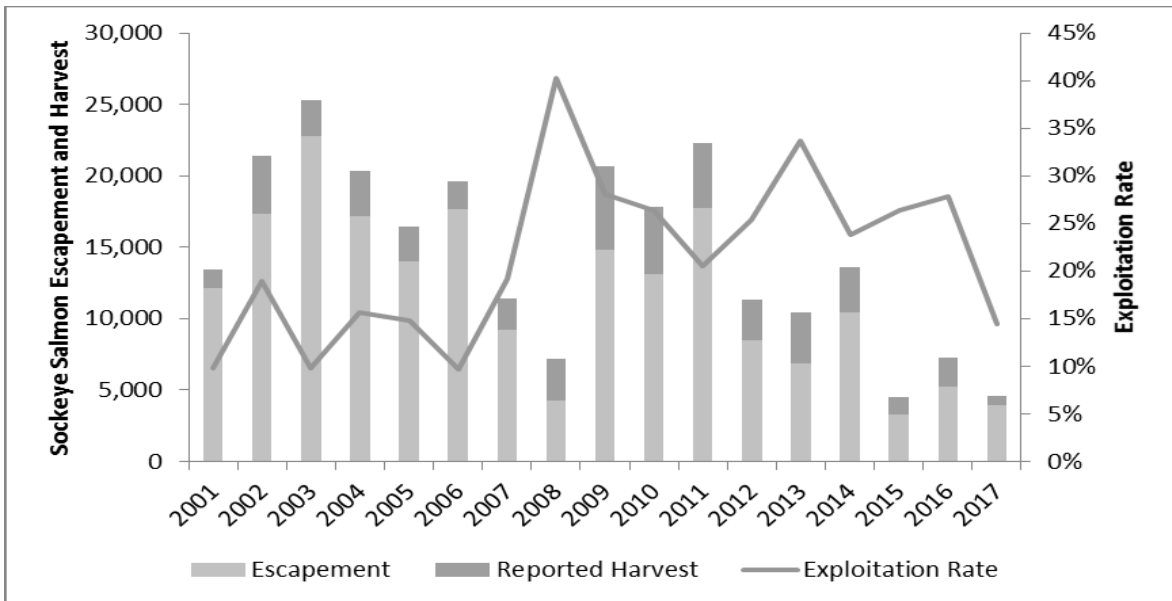


Figure 3. Reported harvest, escapement, and exploitation rate for Klag Lake Sockeye Salmon, 2001-2017.

Redoubt Lake Sockeye Salmon - The Forest Service operates the Redoubt Lake weir which was installed June 16. As of August 12, 65,836 Sockeye Salmon have entered the lake which is well above average. The Redoubt Lake Sockeye Salmon model is predicting that 80,000 Sockeye Salmon will return to Redoubt Lake this season (**Figure 4**). On July 11, in accordance with the Redoubt Bay and Lake Sockeye Salmon Management Plan, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game raised the subsistence limit from 10 daily and 50 annual per household to 25 daily and 100 annually per household. These limits were based on an in-season model prediction of about 95,000 returning. In 2017, at least 55,702 Sockeye Salmon passed through the weir into Redoubt Lake (**Figure 5**).

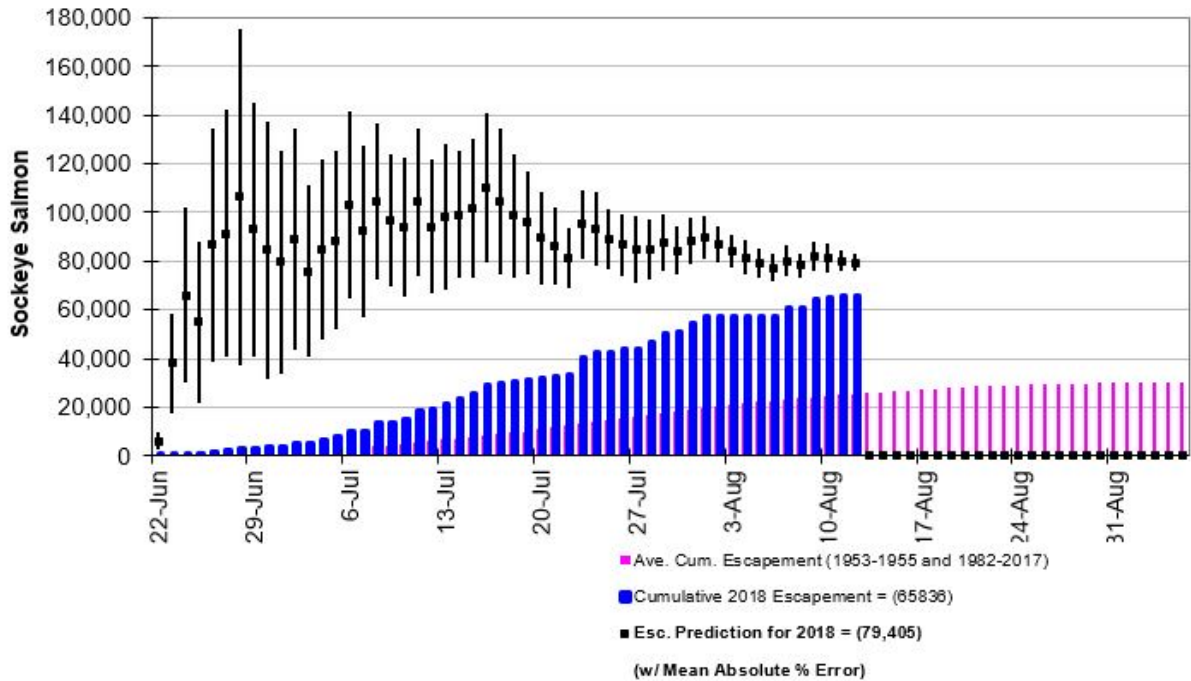


Figure 4. In season predictions of the Redoubt Lake Sockeye Salmon escapement based on weir counts through August 12.

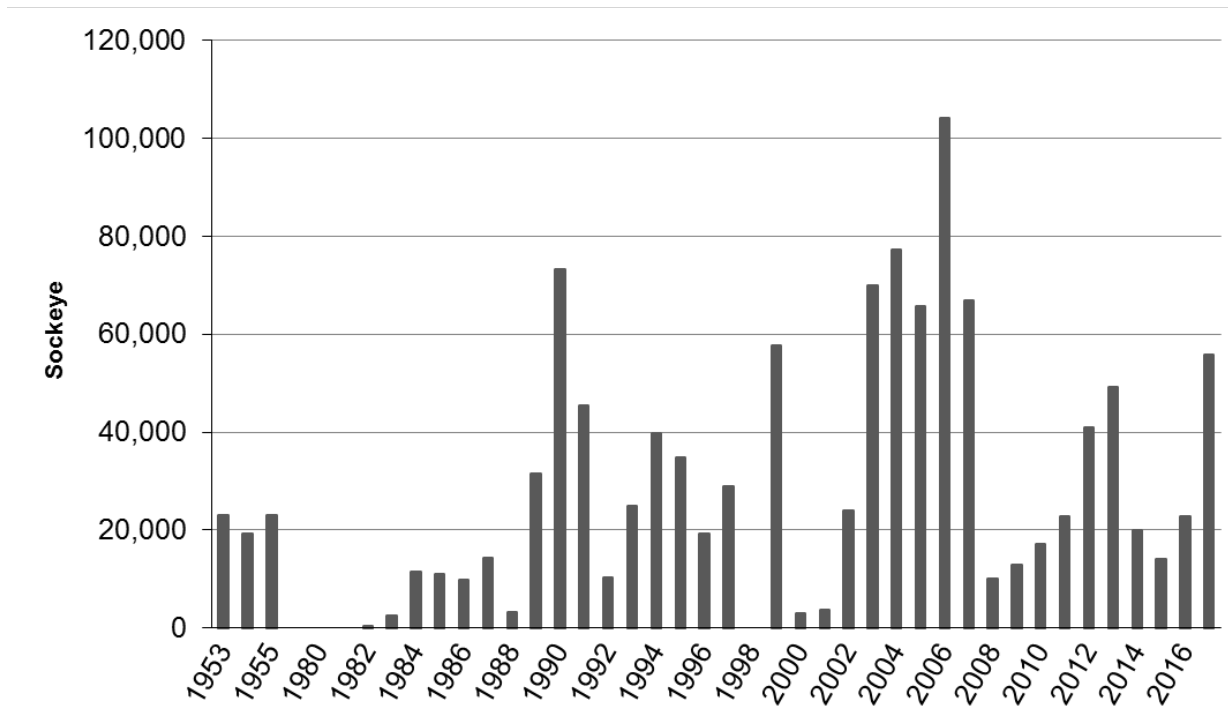


Figure 5. Annual Sockeye Salmon expanded escapement into Redoubt Lake for years with data: 1953 to 1955, 1982 to 1997, and 1999 to 2017. The weir was not operated in 1998.

Sitka Sound Pacific Herring – The commercial, subsistence, and spawning season for Pacific Herring in Sitka Sound occurs about mid-March through mid-April. According to preliminary accounts and data, the commercial and subsistence seasons were not successful in 2018 while the spawning season was marginally successful. The commercial fishery closed on April 3 with only about one third of the guideline harvest level (GHL) harvested. Accounts from the Sitka Tribe of Alaska indicate poor quantity and quality of subsistence harvest, and that their subsistence needs were not met. Other harvesters have said their catch rates were lower than the Tribes. Miles of shoreline receiving herring spawn indicates the spawning season was below average. However, preliminary estimates of spawn extent from shore and deposition are encouraging as related to the post spawn biomass calculation. This estimate will be available this Fall.

[Alaska Department of Fish and Game news release with a synopsis of the commercial season](#)

Sitka Chinook Salmon – The Chinook Salmon season in Sitka was poor for both the commercial and sport fisheries. Fishers from both groups reported below average catch rates. Management measures decreased the bag limits for resident and non-resident sport anglers and curtailed commercial fishery opportunity. There have been recent reports of increased King Salmon catch in the sport fishery around Sitka.

[More information on King Salmon management in Southeast Alaska](#)

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

Prince of Wales Island/Ketchikan area

Currently 226 Federal salmon/trout/char permits have been issued in the Southeast Alaska/Yakutat region. Of these, 149 have been issued to Federally-qualified subsistence users residing on Prince of Wales Island.

The Hetta Lake weir has been operational since June 7, with 2387 Sockeye Salmon counted at the site. The Eek Lake weir has been operational since June 12th with 37 Sockeye Salmon counted. Both projects are run by the Hydaburg Cooperative Association (HCA). HCA has requested local residents to not engage in any subsistence fishing activity at Eek until 1000 fish have been counted through the weir. The Klawock fish hatchery, operated by Southern Southeast Alaska Regional Aquaculture Association, has been in place since July 1. To date, 583 Sockeye Salmon have been counted.

All commercial fisheries net fisheries are currently active in Districts 1, 2 and 4 while commercial troll fisheries are open in Districts 1-4. The commercial troll fishery closes from August 10-14, with limited opportunity being allowed for Chum Salmon in Terminal Harvest areas during this period. The troll fishery will resume on August 15 and will allow for Chinook Salmon harvest opportunity for the remaining 22,000 fish. Cumulative harvest to date for Districts 1-4 are 3815 Chinook Salmon, 79,710 Sockeye Salmon, 54,690 Coho Salmon, 1,677,095 Pink Salmon and 644,000 Chum Salmon.

Petersburg/Wrangell area

This year's run of Chinook Salmon to the Stikine River is weak and was forecasted at 6,900 fish. This forecast is less than half of 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.

Currently, all commercial fisheries are open in the area. The commercial troll fishery closes from August 10-14, with limited opportunity being allowed for Chum Salmon in Terminal Harvest areas during this period. The troll fishery will resume on August 15 and will allow for Chinook Salmon harvest opportunity for the remaining 22,000 fish. Cumulative harvest to date for Districts 6-8 are: 4550 Chinook Salmon, 29,200 Sockeye Salmon, 33,700 Coho Salmon, 1,089,400 Pink Salmon and 435,400 Chum Salmon.

There have been 115 fishing permits issued for the Stikine River subsistence salmon fishery. Weather and river conditions remained good through the end of the sockeye fishing season but participation in the fishery was low this week. The estimated cumulative subsistence harvest is 10 large Chinook, 30 Coho and 1,720 Sockeye Salmon.

Currently 226 Federal salmon/trout/char permits have been issued in the Southeast Alaska/Yakutat region. Of these, 49 have been issued to Federally-qualified subsistence users residing in the Petersburg/Wrangell area.



Hetta Lake weir and camp 2018. (Cathy Needham photo)

Yakutat, Juneau, and Admiralty areas of Northern Southeast Alaska - Jake Musslewhite (907-789-6256; jgmusslewhite@fs.fed.us), Forest Service, Tongass National Forest.

Yakutat area:
Northern inside waters:
Neva Lake Sockeye Salmon:
Sitkoh Lake Sockeye Salmon:
Southeast Alaska Web Links

Weekly Summary author and report not available this week. Look forward to next week's action packed reports. Author deployed in field.

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

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, 8/11/2018 Update – Dave Sarafin, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park/Preserve, (907) 822-7281, dave_sarafin@nps.gov

The Long Lake salmon weir along the McCarthy Road will not be operated by NPS staff this season, due to lack of funding. NPS staff removed all equipment and weir materials from the weir site last week.

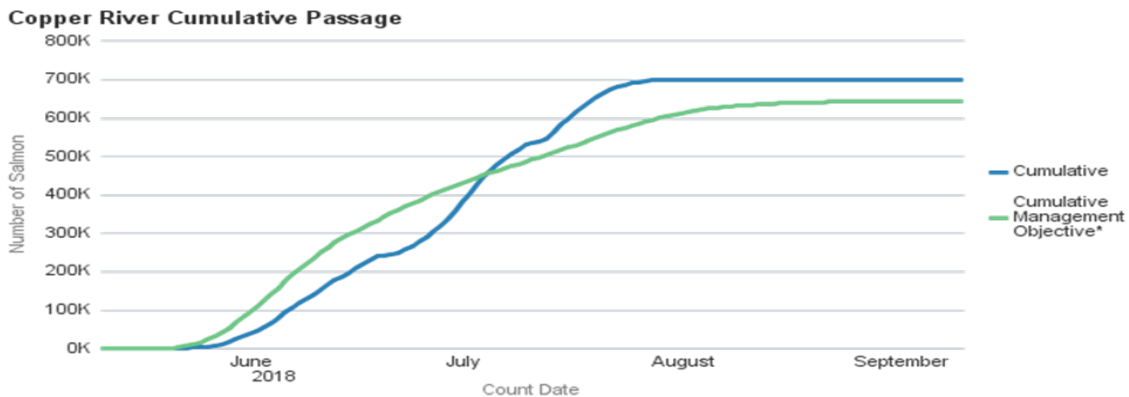
The Tanada Creek salmon weir, located at the Batzulnetas traditional subsistence fishing site, was installed on June 21. The first Sockeye Salmon was recorded passing the weir on July 4. As of August 11, 4,345 Sockeye Salmon and 0 Chinook Salmon have been recorded passing the site for the season. The future operation of the Tanada Creek weir is also uncertain, as it too, was unsuccessful in securing continuing funds from FRMP.

The ADFG counting tower in the Gulkana River has reported a total passage estimate of 4,686 Chinook Salmon through August 6. Recent periods of heavy precipitation have created turbid conditions in the river which limit visibility and may affect counts.

The Native Village of Eyak, Baird Canyon fishwheels captured and tagged 5,578 Chinook Salmon through July 7. The upriver fishwheels at Canyon Creek captured 4,125 Chinook Salmon through July 21, of which, 432 were recaptured fish that had been tagged at the downstream wheels.

The ADFG sonar at Miles Lake (located just downstream of the Million Dollar Bridge in the Copper River) discontinued data collection for the season on July 28 and provided a season passage estimate of 701,577 salmon for the season. This estimate is 17% above the cumulative management objective of 601,096 salmon for this date in the season.

2018 Upper Copper River Salmon Passage at Miles Lake Sonar



Source:

http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareacopperriver.salmon_escapement.

The Federal subsistence fishery in the Chitina Subdistrict is open to fishing and expected to remain open through September 30. One hundred nine (109) Federal Chitina Subdistrict permits have been issued on the FWS online data base. Additional permits for this subdistrict have been issued in Chitina and Kennecott, NPS ranger stations that do not have internet connectivity.

The Glennallen Subdistrict is open for Federal subsistence users and is expected to remain open until September 30. Three hundred eight (308) Federal Glennallen permits have been issued on the FWS online data base. Additional permits for this subdistrict have been issued in Chitina and Kennecott, NPS ranger stations that do not have internet connectivity.

The Batzulnetas fishery is open. One Federal permit has been issued.

One Federal Special Action has been issued by the in season manager this season:

- Delaying the starting date of the Chitina Subdistrict Federal subsistence salmon fishery to June 1.

Links:

ADFG Miles Lake daily sonar estimates

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>

ADFG Copper River Inseason Commercial Harvest Estimates

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

ADFG Gulkana River counting tower

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

ADFG Emergency Orders and News Releases

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

Links:

ADFG Miles Lake daily sonar estimates

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>

ADFG Copper River Inseason Commercial Harvest Estimates

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

ADFG Gulkana River counting tower

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ADFG 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.
(907) 424-4759 mburcham@fs.fed.us

10 August 2018

A total of 56 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. Ninety-seven permits were issued in 2017 resulting in the reported harvest of 514 Coho and 127 Sockeye Salmon from Copper River Delta fresh waters in this fishery.

Cook Inlet Area – Jeff Anderson, Field Supervisor, Kenai Fish and Wildlife Field Office (907) 260-0132 Jeffrey_Anderson@fws.gov

A total of 364 permits for Cook Inlet Federal subsistence fisheries have been issued to qualified households through August 8. This includes 92 Kenai River permits (FFCI01) and 12 Designated Fisher permits to Cooper Landing households; 34 Kenai River permits (FFCI01) and 3 Designated Fisher permits to Hope households; and 123 Kenai River permits (FFCI01), 95 Kasilof River permits (FFCI02), and 5 Designated Fisher permits to Ninilchik households.

The 2018 subsistence dip net fisheries for salmon opened 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 1,520 Sockeye Salmon. Harvest reported to date in the Kasilof River dip net fishery is 47 Sockeye Salmon.

The Kasilof River experimental community gillnet fishery began on June 16 and continues through August 15. Harvest reported through August 8 includes 716 Sockeye Salmon. The Kenai River community gillnet fishery began on July 1 and continues through August 15, and then from September 10 – 30. Harvest reported through August 8 is 1,488 Sockeye, 32 Coho, and 6 Pink salmon.

Emergency Special Action 10-RS-02-18 was issued to close Federal subsistence fisheries for Sockeye Salmon in the Kenai River downstream from the outlet of Skilak Lake beginning 12:01 a.m., Thursday, August 9, through 11:59 p.m., Sunday, September 30, 2018. The late-run will likely not achieve the lower bound of the sustainable escapement goal and the restriction was necessary to conserve late-run Kenai River Sockeye Salmon.

Fish counts at some Alaska Department of Fish and Game (Department)-operated assessment projects are available on-line at:

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

Alaska Department of Fish and Game emergency orders and news releases affecting upper Kenai Peninsula sport fisheries can be found at:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/EONR/index.cfm?ADFG=area.list&Year=2017&AreaID=5>

Kodiak Island Area – Michael Brady, Refuge Manager, - Kodiak NWR
(907) 487-2600/0230 or michael_brady@fws.gov or Kevin Van Hatten (907) 487-0230
Kevin_VanHatten@fws.gov

Subsistence fishing around the Kodiak Archipelago has been dwindling down the past couple of weeks. Many villagers continue to hunt deer to meet their subsistence needs. The Dog Salmon weir operated by Alaska Department of Fish and Game – Commercial Fisheries Division has been pulled. Other weirs will tentatively be pulled within the next week to two weeks, which include; Litnik (Afognak Island), Frazer Fish Pass, and Saltery River. It is understood that many subsistence users are continuing to wait for the Coho (silver) Salmon to start migrating in before continuing their harvest efforts.

Pink Salmon are continuing strong in the Buskin River which appears to be having about above average run of even-year Pink Salmon. Coho Salmon are being caught by trollers around Kodiak and are beginning to show up in the Buskin.

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**
(907) 271-2776 Jonathon_Gerken@fws.gov

All of the assessments of salmon returns are conducted by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, and provide the basis for any in-season assessment and management.

Bristol Bay:

The 2018 Bristol Bay Sockeye Salmon run is forecast to be approximately 41 to 61 million fish for nine river systems: Kvichak, Alagnak, Naknek, Egegik, Ugashik, Wood, Igushik, Nushagak, and Togiak Rivers. All river met escapement goals. The commercial salmon season in Bristol Bay opened June 1. Commercial harvest as of August 13 is approximately 43.5 million fish for all salmon species throughout all districts.

Chignik:

Chignik River fisheries are not performing well this season specific to achieving escapement goals and meeting subsistence fishing goals. The escapement goal for early-run Sockeye Salmon in the Chignik River drainage of 350,000 – 450,000 through July 30 was not achieved. The final count was 263,979 on July 31.

There is concern regarding the strength of the late-run Sockeye Salmon run. The August in-river goal was met; however, the late-run Sockeye Salmon counts are behind the

interim escapement goals for the date of August 12. To date, 144,852 late-run Sockeye Salmon were enumerated where 190,000 – 320,000 fish were forecast.

The Chinook Salmon count as of August 12 is 825 fish, small numbers of Chinook Salmon will continue to be enumerated at the weir through the end of August; however, the run is not expected to meet escapement goals.

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	-25,000 in August and 50,000 in September in addition to late run escapement goals
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:

The current commercial harvest in the Alaska Peninsula Management Area through August 1 is 5.2 million, of which 3.0 million were Sockeye Salmon. Pink and Chum Salmon catches have increased. The only remaining escapement project still operating is the Bear River, with a BEG of 117,000 – 195,000 for late-run Sockeye Salmon. The late-run began on August 5 and thus far has a cumulative count of 100,669 fish as of August 12.

Aleutian Islands.

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

Federal Subsistence Fisheries Regulations for Bristol Bay Area

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

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 or

Fred Bue Fredrick_Bue@fws.gov

Emmonak Summer Office (907) 949-1798

The Emmonak Field Office is closed for the season. You can contact management staff at 907-455-1849 or 907-456-0406.

Summer Season Update Summary

Summer season management is nearly over in the in the Alaska portion of drainage. The last few Chinook Salmon are passing the Eagle sonar and the Chena and Salcha Rivers assessment projects ended this week.

1.6 million Summer Chum Salmon passed the Pilot Station sonar. Combined with over 425,000 Summer Chum Salmon harvested in the Districts 1 and 2 subsistence and commercial fisheries, puts the preliminary Summer Chum Salmon run size over 2 million fish for the season. The Summer Chum Salmon drainage-wide escapement goal was exceeded. However, Summer Chum Salmon escapement goals in the E.F. Andreafsky and Anvik Rivers were not met.

159,000 Chinook Salmon passed the Pilot Station sonar. Combined with approximately 5,000 Chinook Salmon harvested in the Districts 1 and 2 subsistence fishery, plus another 8,000 in the Andreafsky tributary below Pilot Station, puts the preliminary Chinook Salmon run size at roughly 172,000 fish for the season. This is near the lower end of the preseason forecast of 173,000 to 251,000 fish and tracked slightly better than 2015. The Eagle Sonar near the Canadian Border is approximately 99% complete and has a near average cumulative passage of 57,000 Chinook Salmon through August 12. Border passage objectives have been met, which include 42,500 to 55,000 for escapement plus our harvest sharing obligations with Canada. The Chinook Salmon escapement goal was met on the E.F. Andreafsky River and the Salcha River. High water has hindered visual counts on the Chena River and estimated passage will not be available until post season analysis of sonar data.

The preliminary summer season commercial harvests for Districts 1, 2, 4, and 6 are 569,224 Summer Chum Salmon. Approximately 12,314 incidental Chinook Salmon were caught and released, and approximately 3,103 were caught and retained for personal use.

Fall Season Outlook

The 2018 Fall Chum Salmon preseason run projection, based on the Summer Chum to Fall Chum Salmon relationship, is for a run size range of 700,000 to 900,000 fish. This level of abundance is typically sufficient to meet escapement and subsistence needs, and provide a surplus for commercial and personal use purposes.

Fall Assessment Information

Fall season assessment began in the lower Yukon on July 16 with the 6-inch Lower Yukon Test Fishery (LYTF) which has a cumulative CPUE through August 11 of 772, near the median of 743. The Mt. Village Test Fishery (MVTF) began on July 18 and has a cumulative CPUE through August 11 of 1,361, above the median of 1,087. The Pilot Station sonar transitioned to fall season assessment on July 19 and has a cumulative passage of 335,971 through August 11, near the median of 342,422. The Chandalar River sonar is operational, however, high water is hindering counts at this time. Passage estimates are expected to begin when water levels recede.

Fall Season Management Actions

On Monday, July 16, the Coastal District transitioned to fall season management with subsistence fishing continuing to be open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Effective 3:00 p.m. Sunday, July 15, District 1 transitioned to fall season management and subsistence fishing in District 1 was opened to the lower river regulatory schedule of 7 days per week, 24 hours a day except for 12 hours before, during, and 12 hours after each commercial fishing period. The waters of Pastolik and Pastoliak rivers just a few miles north of Kotlik outside the Yukon River are closed to subsistence during commercial fishing periods due to illegal fishing activity. On Wednesday, July 18, Districts 2 and 3 transitioned to fall season management and subsistence fishing in Districts 2 and 3 were opened 7 days per week, 24 hours a day except for 12 hours before, during, and 12 hours after each commercial fishing period. Subdistrict 4-A transitioned to fall season management on July 31, Subdistrict 4-B and 4-C transitioned to fall season management on July 29, and Subdistricts 5-A, 5-B, and 5-C transitioned to fall season management on August 7. Subsistence was relaxed from two, 48-hour periods per week to 5 days per week. Subsistence fishing was relaxed to 7 days per week with 7.5" or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels in the lower and middle portions of Subdistrict 5-D on August 9. The upper portion of Subdistrict 5-D will be relaxed on August 16. In all areas, subsistence fishermen may use gillnets with a maximum mesh size of 7.5 inches or smaller during the fall season.

Eight fall season commercial periods have occurred in each of Districts 1 and 2 so far this season with a preliminary combined harvest of 70,500 Fall Chum Salmon. Subdistrict 4-A has had one fall season commercial period with an estimated harvest of 596 Chum Salmon. Commercial fishing will be open 24-hours per day, seven days per week in Subdistricts 5-B and 5-C since it is a small scale commercial fishery with an expected harvest to be around 2,000 fall chum salmon. Upriver commercial harvests will begin when Fall Chum Salmon begin arriving any day now.

Consultation

Extensive public outreach and consultation was performed during the fall of 2017 and spring of 2018 to inform and seek input from Yukon River fishermen and stakeholders. Outreach efforts continued during the season. The tenth YRDFA weekly teleconference was held on August 7 with very few subsistence fishermen reporting this week. Lower and middle Yukon River fishermen are done with summer season subsistence harvests because salmon abundance has tapered off. Fishermen are berry picking while waiting for fall chum salmon to enter their sections of river. A few upper Yukon fishermen are still fishing, but most are done at this time. Some fishermen were satisfied with their Chinook Salmon harvest and others were short of filling their subsistence needs. Canadian fishermen reported disappointing catches at this time, with some pulling their nets. Furthermore, the fall season outlook and management strategies were discussed on recent YRDFA teleconferences. Participants communicated the importance of the fall chum salmon run in meeting their subsistence needs due the lack of Chinook salmon in this year's harvests.

KUSKOKWIM RIVER

In Season Manager – Ken Stahlnecker, Refuge Manager, Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge Contact [Kenneth Stahlnecker@fws.gov](mailto:Kenneth_Stahlnecker@fws.gov); (907) 543-3151 or [Lewis Coggins@fws.gov](mailto:Lewis_Coggins@fws.gov) or author Aaron Moses [Aaron Moses@fws.gov](mailto:Aaron_Moses@fws.gov)

Summary:

There were no new regulation changes, the current regulations are from the following:

Through Alaska Department of Fish and Game Emergency Order #3-S-WR-9-18, effective 12:01 a.m. Thursday, July 26, 2018, the following restrictions to the mainstem Kuskokwim River subsistence salmon fishery are rescinded:

- 6-inch or less mesh requirements for subsistence gillnets;
- 25 fathom gillnet length restrictions from the mouth of the Johnson River upstream to the headwaters of the Kuskokwim River (Sections 2–5);
- The live release requirement of Chinook Salmon caught in beach seines, fish wheels, and by hook and line;
- The use of dip nets for the taking of salmon; and
- The closed waters within Kuskokuak and 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

In addition, subsistence fishing with hook and line for Chinook Salmon will remain closed within the Kwethluk, Kisaralik, Kasigluk, Tuluksak, and Aniak river drainages. Any Chinook Salmon caught must be returned to the water alive.

Kuskokwim Weir Chinook Counts:

Kwethluk River weir Chinook Salmon counts as of August 5, 2018 is at 2,338. In 2017 and 2016, Chinook Salmon counts for the Kwethluk River were at 7,271 and 3,232 respectively.

Kogrukluk River weir Chinook Salmon counts as of August 5, 2018 is at 5,343. In 2017 and 2016, Chinook Salmon counts were at 8,596 and 6,932, respectively.

Salmon River Pitka Fork weir Chinook Salmon counts as of August 5, 2018 is at 5,317. In 2017 and 2016 Chinook Salmon counts were at 7,843 and 6,296, respectively.

Test Fisheries:

As of August 5, the cumulative catch per unit of effort (CPUE) of Chinook Salmon at the Alaska Department of Fish and Game's Bethel Test Fishery is 663. Cumulative CPUE on this date during 2017 and 2016 were 371 and 680, respectively.

Cumulative CPUE for Chum Salmon is at 8,128. Cumulative CPUE on this date during 2017 and 2016 were 6,667 and 3,925 respectively.

Cumulative CPUE for Sockeye is at 2,225. Cumulative CPUE on this date during 2017 and 2016 were 2,652 and 2,317, respectively.

Cumulative CPUE for Coho is at 290. Cumulative CPUE on this date during 2017 and 2016 were 722 and 718, 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

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

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/>

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Norton Sound District

Silver salmon numbers are coming in stronger at the towers, weirs and in commercial catches. Pink salmon returns are beginning to slow. To date, over 3 million pinks have passed through the Nome weir, which is more than a million fish over the previous record.

Subsistence Fishing: Subsistence fishing is open 7 days a week in all marine and fresh waters of Norton Sound except for the Nome Subdistrict which is on the summer schedule.

Sport Fishing: From Bald Head (Isaac's Point) to Point Romanof, king salmon fishing is closed and the use of bait is prohibited, except in the Unalakleet River drainage where the limit is 2 king salmon harvested for the year and bait is allowed. The pink salmon catch limit has been doubled to 20 fish a day and 20 pinks in possession in the Unalakleet River drainage and all marine and fresh waters from Golovin Subdistrict north to Cape Prince of Wales.

Commercial Fishing: The Norton Sound commercial chum salmon harvest is the second best on record at 228,000 fish.

Subdistrict 6 (Unalakleet)

Subsistence Fishing: Subsistence fishing is open 7 days a week in all marine and fresh waters of the Subdistrict.

Commercial Fishing: The cumulative catches to August 6 are 600 king, 102,000 chum, 19,000 pink, 1,600 sockeye and 28,000 silver salmon by 68 permit holders. The silver harvest is well above average for early August. Commercial fishing opened for two 48-hour periods per week from 6 PM Saturdays until 9 PM Mondays, and from 6 PM Wednesdays until 6 PM Fridays, However, the first period (Saturday August 4-Monday) was extended for 24 hours due to rough sea conditions preventing permit holders from fishing. Also, the next Saturday period (August 10) was cancelled in order to allow the buyer to catch up processing the peak silver catches occurring.

Unalakleet River Floating Weir — A cooperative project of Fish and Game, Norton Sound Economic Development Corporation (NSEDC), Native Village of the Unalakleet and BLM, with major funding provided by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Subsistence Management. Escapement goals for the weir have not yet been established. The cumulative counts to August 10 were 3,300 king, 127,000 chum, 630 sockeye and 58,000 silver salmon. The silver count is the highest for the same period in the 9-year history of the project.

North River Tower — Camp J. B. — A Cooperative Project of NSEDC with assistance from ADF&G. 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. The cumulative counts to August 10 were 2,600 king, 25,000 chum, 473,000 pink, 60 sockeye and 5,700 silver salmon. The silver count is well above the recent 5-year average.

Subdistrict 5 (Shaktoolik)

Subsistence Fishing: Subsistence fishing is open 7 days a week in all marine and fresh waters of the Subdistrict.

Commercial Fishing: The cumulative catches to August 6 are 13 king, 39,000 chum, 2,500 pink, 400 sockeye and 14,000 silver salmon by 22 permit holders. The silver catch has been well above average early August. Commercial fishing opened for two 48-hour periods per week from 6 PM Saturdays until 9 PM Mondays, and from 6 PM Wednesdays until 6 PM Fridays, However, the first period (Saturday August 4-Monday) was extended for 24 hours due to rough sea conditions preventing permit holders from fishing. Also, the next Saturday period (August 10) was cancelled in order to allow the buyer to catch up processing the peak silver catches occurring.

Shaktoolik Sonar/Tower – A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance from Fish & Game has no escapement goals established. The cumulative counts to August 10 were 1,035 king, 50,000 chum, 800,000 pink, 12 sockeye and 28,000 silver salmon. The silver count is double the previous best count for this date in the 4-year history of the project.

Subdistrict 4 (Norton Bay)

Subsistence Fishing: Subsistence fishing is open 7 days a week in all marine and fresh waters of the Subdistrict.

Commercial Fishing: Cumulative catches to August 6 are 47 king, 14,000 chum, 1,000 pink, 155 sockeye, and 500 silver salmon harvested by 13 permit holders. The silver salmon catch is below average, but it is early in the season. Commercial fishing opened for two 48-hour periods per week from 6 PM Saturdays until 9 PM Mondays, and from 6 PM Wednesdays until 6 PM Fridays, However, the first period (Saturday August 4-Monday) was extended for 24 hours due to rough sea conditions preventing permit holders from fishing. Also, the next Saturday period (August 10) was cancelled in order to allow the buyer to catch up processing the peak silver catches occurring.

Inglutalik River Tower – A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance from ADF&G. No escapement goals have been established. The cumulative counts to August 10 were 195 king, 28,000 chum, 20,000 pink, 100 sockeye and 1,600 silver salmon. The silver count is below the 5-year average.

Subdistrict 3 (Elim)

Subsistence Fishing: Subsistence fishing is open 7 days a week in all marine and fresh waters of the Subdistrict.

Commercial Fishing: The cumulative catches to August 6 are 125 king, 38,000 chum, 9,000 pink, 230 sockeye, and 2,300 silver salmon harvested by 33 permit holders. The silver salmon catch is above average for this early in the season. Commercial fishing opened for two 48-hour periods per week from 6 PM Saturdays until 9 PM Mondays, and from 6 PM Wednesdays until 6 PM Fridays, However, the first period (Saturday August 4-Monday) was extended for 24 hours due to rough sea conditions preventing permit holders from fishing. Also, the next Saturday period (August 10) was cancelled in order to allow the buyer to catch up processing the peak silver catches occurring.

Kwiniuk River Tower-Camp Joel – A Fish & Game project with assistance from NSEDC has escapement goals of 250 kings, 11,500 – 23,000 chums, 8,400 pinks and 650-1,300 silvers (aerial survey goal). The cumulative counts to August 10 were 84 king, 42,000 chum, 1.8 million pink, 6 sockeye and 3,400 silver salmon. The silver count is better than all years except 2006 when there was no commercial fishing due to the lack of a buyer.

Subdistrict 2 (Golovin)

Subsistence Fishing: Subsistence fishing is open 7 days a week in all marine and fresh waters of the Subdistrict.

Commercial Fishing: The cumulative catches to August 6 are 31 king, 25,000 chum, 25,000 chum, 4,000 pink, 70 sockeye and 500 silver salmon harvested by 18 permit holders. The silver harvest is above average and it is still early in the season. Commercial fishing opened for two 48-hour periods per week from 6 PM Saturdays until 9 PM Mondays, and from 6 PM Wednesdays until 6 PM Fridays, However, the first period (Saturday August 4-Monday) was extended for 24 hours due to rough sea conditions

preventing permit holders from fishing. Also, the next Saturday period (August 10) was cancelled in order to allow the buyer to catch up processing the peak silver catches occurring.

Fish River Tower - A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance from Fish & Game. No escapement goals have been established. The cumulative counts to August 10 were 72 king, 44,000 chum, 2.6 million pink, 36 sockeye and 4,000 silver salmon. It is still early for the silver run.

Subdistrict 1 (Nome)

Pink salmon counts are starting to fall after a record breaking season.

Subsistence Fishing: By regulation, the summer subsistence salmon gillnet fishing schedule went into effect in the Nome Subdistrict on June 15. The marine waters east of Cape Nome continue to be open seven 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 PM Wednesday until 6 PM Monday. Subsistence salmon fishing permits are required, and stream specific harvest limits are listed on the permit. There are no catch limits in the marine waters. Also effective June 15, beach seining for salmon opened 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 anytime gillnet fishing is open.

Commercial Fishing: The cumulative catch to August 6 was 10 king, 9,000 chum, 3,000 pink, 140 sockeye and 800 silver salmon by 6 permit holders. The silver salmon catch is off to a good start. Commercial fishing continued for two 48-hour periods per week from 9 PM Tuesday until 9 PM Thursday until and from 9 PM Friday until 9 PM Sunday.

Solomon River Weir – A Fish & Game project, has no escapement goals yet established. The cumulative counts to August 10 were 11 king, 3,400 chum, 458,000 pink, 18 sockeye and 160 silver salmon.

Bonanza River Weir – A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance from Fish & Game. No escapement goals have yet been established. The cumulative counts to August 10 were 6 king, 7,200 chum, 880,000 pink, 190 sockeye and 570 silver salmon.

Eldorado River Weir – A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance from Fish & Game has an escapement goal of 6,000 – 9,200 chum salmon. Cumulative counts through July 31 were 31 king, 42,000 chum, 191,000 pink, and 47 silver salmon. The project has concluded operations for the season.

Nome River Weir – A Fish & Game project with assistance from NSEDC has an escapement goal of 2,900 – 4,300 chum salmon and 13,000 pink salmon. The cumulative counts to August 10 were 38 king, 4,400 chum, 3.1 million pink, 70 sockeye and 820

silver salmon. The pink count is more than double previous pink record of 1.2 million set in 2008. The silver count is off to the best start in more than 10 years.

Snake River Weir – A cooperative project between Fish & Game and NSEDC has an escapement goal of 1,600 – 2,500 chum salmon. The cumulative counts to August 10 were 1 king, 2,600 chum, 444,000 pink, 6 sockeye and 39 silver salmon.

Port Clarence District

Subsistence Fishing: Subsistence gillnet and beach seining are open 7 days a week. Subsistence salmon fishing permits are required for the Port Clarence District, Pilgrim River drainage and Salmon Lake. Catch limits are listed on the subsistence permits. Catch limits on sockeye salmon have been waived.

Commercial Fishing: The department expects the commercial fishery to remain closed because of a lack of buyer interest despite the in-river goal of 30,000 sockeye salmon in Pilgrim River being expected to be reached.

Pilgrim River Weir – A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance from Fish and Game. 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 to August 10 were 84 king, 28,000 chum, 46,000 pink, 31,000 sockeye and 100 silver salmon. The historical average 90% point of the sockeye passage at the weir is August 3.

Kotzebue District

Subsistence Fishing: No subsistence fishing restrictions are expected in 2018.

Commercial Fishing: The commercial catch through Friday, August 10 was 438,000 chum salmon caught by 92 permit holders. That was 20% higher than last year for mid-August, and is the seventh highest in history. This year's catch rate is tracking toward the higher end of the ADF&G forecast for a harvest of 400,000 to 600,000 chum salmon in the fishery.

Kobuk River Test Fish - Fish & Game project. The Kobuk River test chum catches are above the long-term average and tracking nearly 20% ahead of last year's catches.

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