

FISHERIES UPDATE FOR THE WEEK OF AUGUST 12 – 18, 2018.

Report #12 - Compiled by George Pappas - (907) 786-3822, George_Pappas@fws.gov
Office of Subsistence Management, USFWS.

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 and removed on August 18. During this time, 592 Sockeye Salmon have been counted at the trap and about 700 have been harvested in the subsistence fishery. Escapement through the net weir, which attempts to account for all fish entering the lake, is at least 1,200. On average, 96% of the run has entered the lake by August 18. 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.

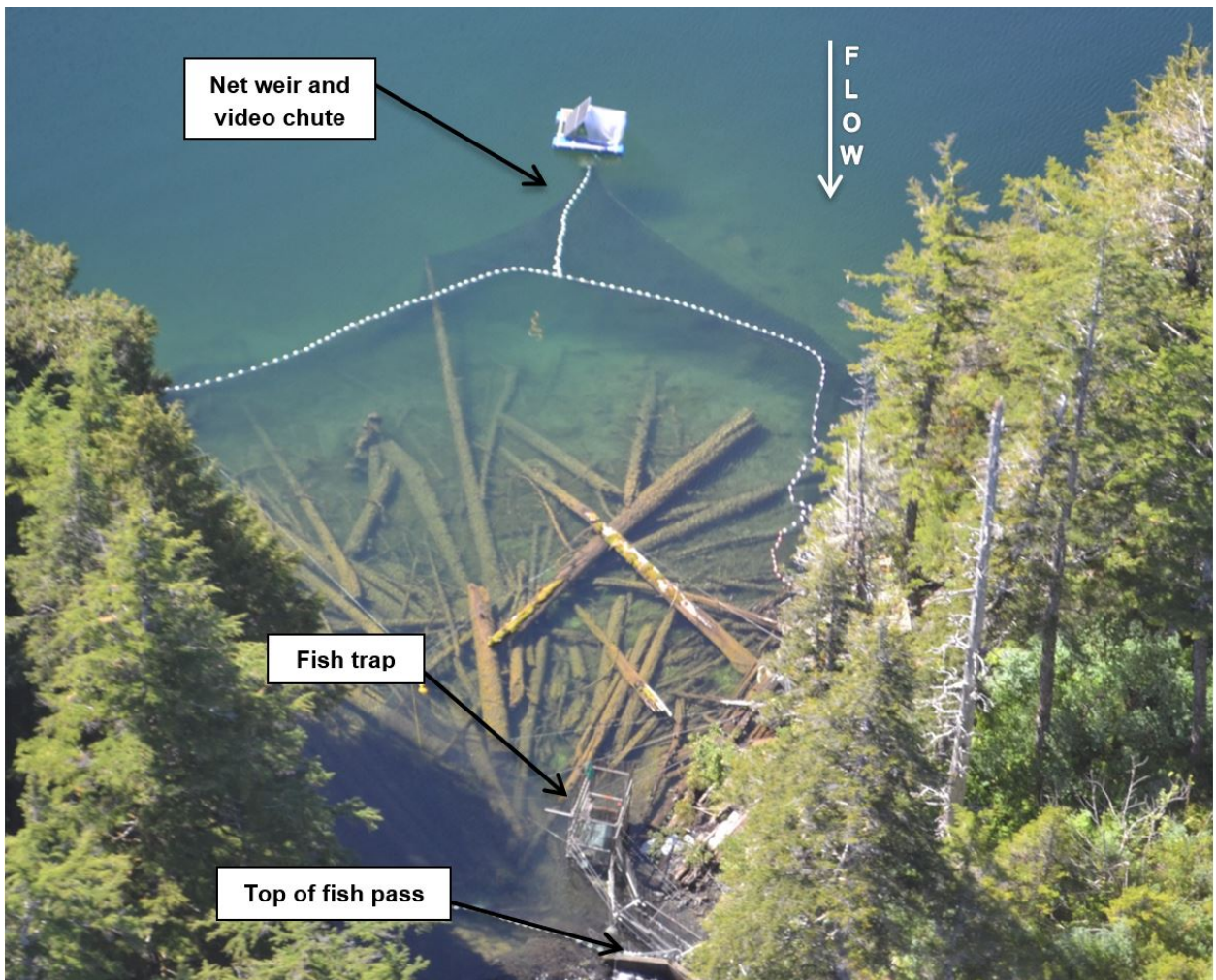


Figure 1. Aerial photo of the Falls Lake outlet illustrating the typical location of weir equipment.

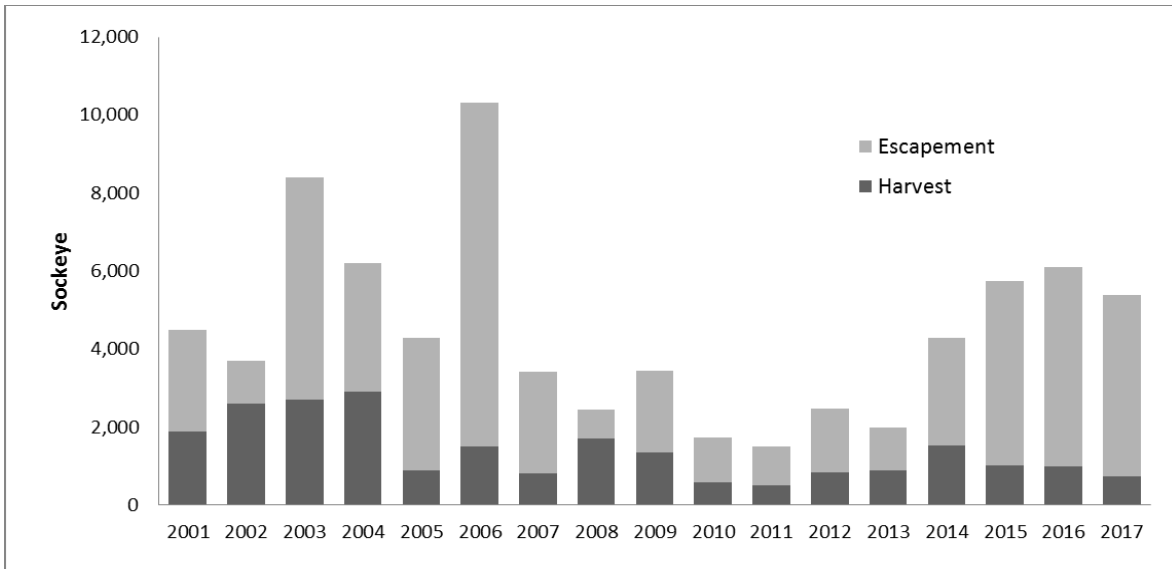


Figure 2. Escapement plus harvest equals total terminal run of Sockeye Salmon at Falls Lake, 2001-2017.

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 18, 1,905 Sockeye Salmon have been counted at the weir and 880 have been harvested in the subsistence fishery. On average, 69% of the run has entered the lake by August 18. 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.

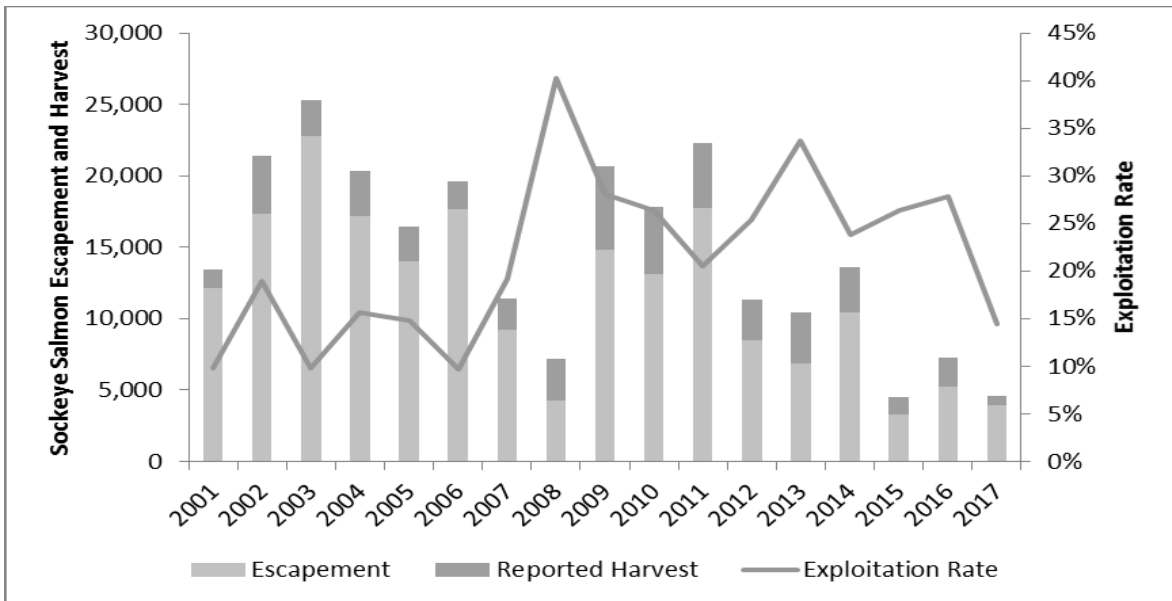


Figure 3. Reported harvest, escapement, and exploitation rate for Klag Lake Sockeye Salmon, 2001-2017.

Redoubt Lake Sockeye Salmon - The Forest Service operates the Redoubt Lake weir which was installed June 16. As of August 18, 68,601 Sockeye Salmon have entered the lake which is well above average. The Redoubt Lake Sockeye Salmon model is predicting that 76,000 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**).

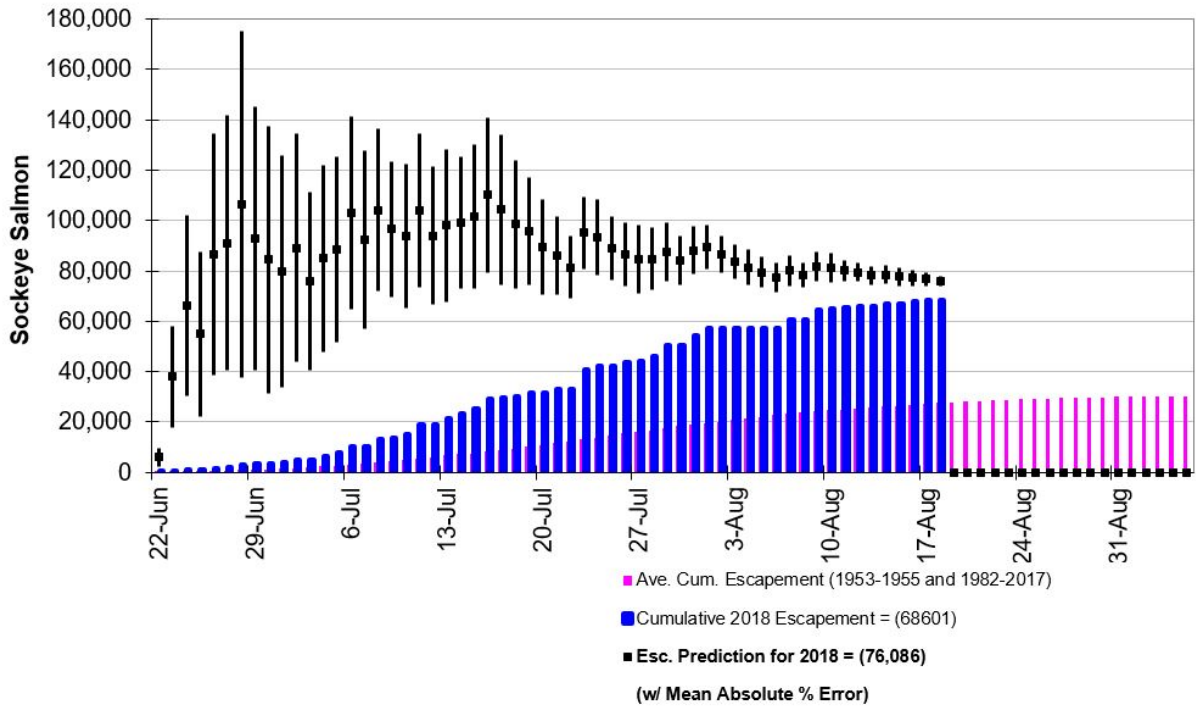


Figure 4. In season predictions of the Redoubt Lake Sockeye Salmon escapement based on weir counts through August 12.

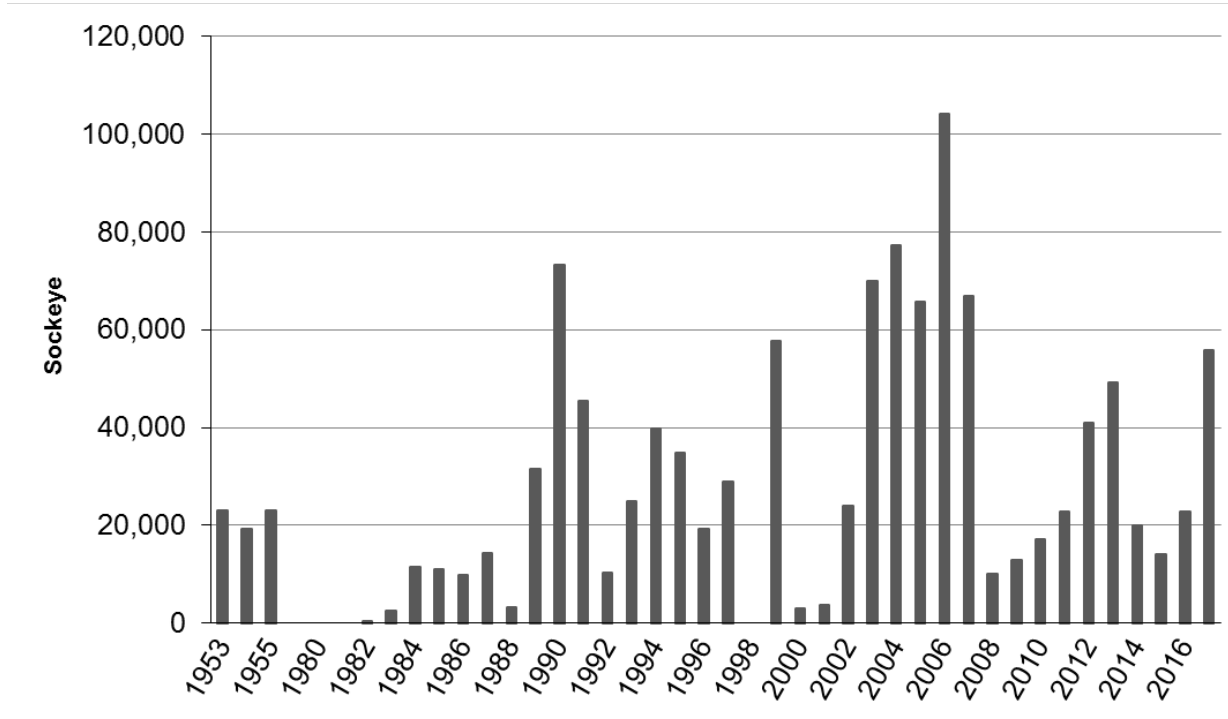


Figure 5. Annual Sockeye Salmon expanded escapement into Redoubt Lake for years with data: 1953 to 1955, 1982 to 1997, and 1999 to 2017. The weir was not operated in 1998.

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.

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 231 Federal salmon/trout/char permits have been issued in the Southeast Alaska/Yakutat region. Of these, 150 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 6983 Sockeye Salmon counted at the site. The Eek Lake weir has been operational since June 12th with 46 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, 1266 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 troll fishery resumed on August 15 with harvest opportunity for 22,000 Chinook Salmon. Cumulative harvest to date for Districts 1-4 are 3920 Chinook Salmon, 98,010 Sockeye Salmon, 74,240 Coho Salmon, 2,607,095 Pink Salmon and 713,000 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 troll fishery resumed on August 15 with harvest opportunity for 22,000 Chinook Salmon. Cumulative harvest to date for Districts 6-8 are: 4720 Chinook Salmon, 35,450 Sockeye Salmon, 56,700 Coho Salmon, 1,538,000 Pink Salmon and 489,400 Chum Salmon.

There have been 117 fishing permits issued for the Stikine River subsistence salmon fishery. A rapidly rising river resulted in poor fishing conditions for part of the week and a field survey observed no one fishing. The estimated cumulative subsistence harvest is 10 large Chinook, 35 Coho and 1,730 Sockeye Salmon.

Currently 231 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.

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 again not available this week. Author just returned and will have report prepared for next week.

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, 8/18/2018 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. The Long Lake Sockeye Salmon stock is considered the largest of the Chitina River Drainage. Escapement counts from this site continued annually throughout a 44 year period, from 1974 through 2017; this was the longest running salmon escapement dataset of the entire Copper River Drainage.

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 18, 5,177 Sockeye Salmon and 0 Chinook Salmon have been

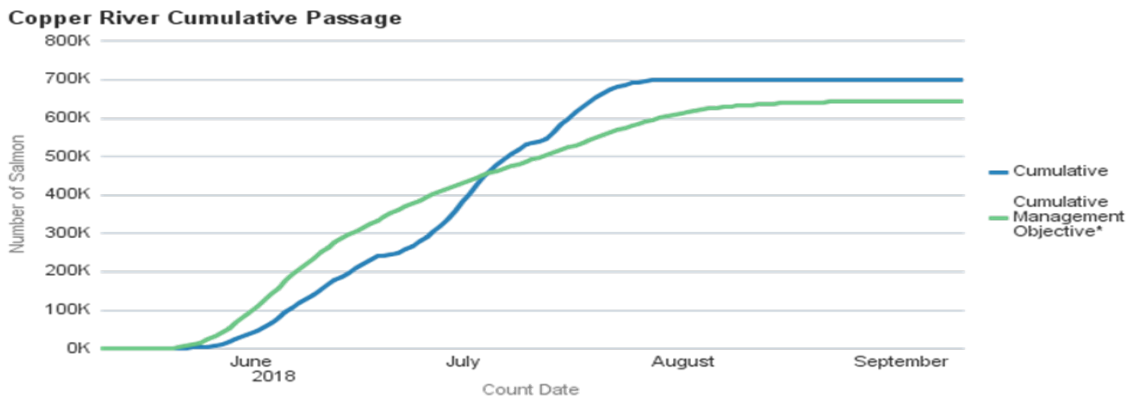
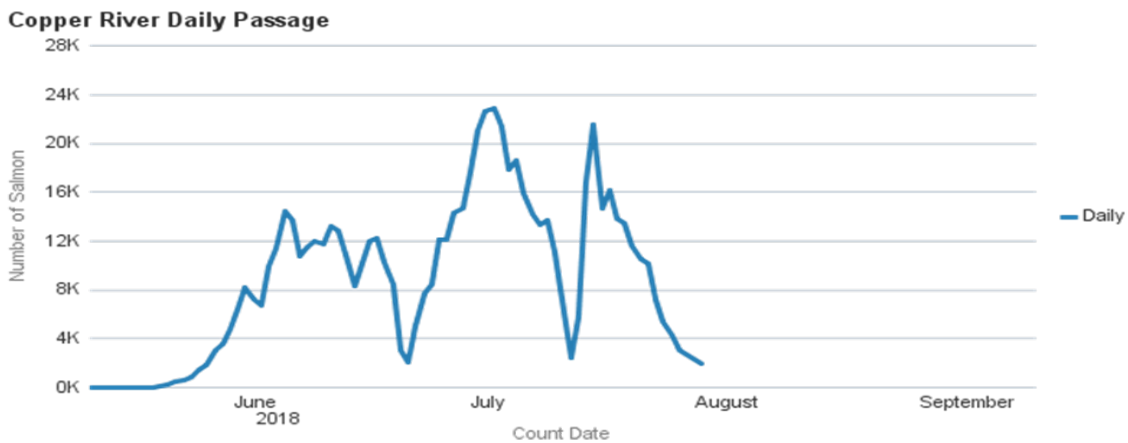
recorded passing the site for the season. The future operation of the Tanada Creek weir is also uncertain, as it too, was unsuccessful in securing continuing funds.

The ADFG counting tower in the Gulkana River has reported a total passage estimate of 4,692 Chinook Salmon through August 13.

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 ten (110) 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 ten (310) 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>

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

A total of 68 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

This is the final weekly report for the Cook Inlet Area in 2018. A total of 366 permits for Cook Inlet Federal subsistence fisheries have been issued to qualified households through August 16. 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 124 Kenai River permits (FFCI01), 96 Kasilof River permits (FFCI02), and 5 Designated Fisher permits to Ninilchik households.

Harvest reported through August 16 in the dip net fishery at Russian River Falls is 1,558 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 continued through August 15. Harvest reported through August 16 includes 716 Sockeye Salmon. The Kenai River community gillnet fishery began on July 1 and continued through August 15, and then from September 10 – 30. Harvest reported through August 16 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

This will be the final Kodiak Area weekly report for the 2018 season. The Sockeye Salmon returns to the Kodiak Archipelago continue to be mixed with low returns to northern systems and average to above average for southern systems. Many of the systems with weirs on them have either met their respective lower escapement goal

with the exception of Litnik (Afognak) and Buskin Rivers, which were below their respective 10 year average.

The Sockeye Salmon returns on those systems with no late run activities have slowed considerably. Saltery Creek weir was closed on August 16, final escapement count of 22,845 (escapement goal 15,000 to 35,000 fish) and Dog Salmon weir was closed on August 8 with a final escapement count of 228,526 Sockeye Salmon and a surprisingly large return of 185,509 Pink Salmon. The late run Sockeye Salmon returns continue to be strong with the Ayakulik River meeting its lower escapement goal, 71,218 fish (escapement goal range 60,000 to 120,000 fish). The total escapement counts are very strong with 260,226 fish, which is within the 10 year average.

The late run Sockeye Salmon returns to Karluk River continue to be strong with 101,391 fish passing the weir (escapement goal 170,000 to 380,000). The total Sockeye Salmon escapement count is strong with 300,268 fish. Subsistence users from Karluk village and Larsen Bay are expected to meet most of their needs because of exceptional escapement of Sockeye Salmon coupled with their traditional reliance on this species. These villagers will be active through early September.

Litnik "Afognak" Lake weir was pulled on August 12 with a cumulative escapement count of 17,601 fish (escapement goal 20,000 to 50,000 fish). Many villagers from Port Lions have reported not being able to meet their subsistence needs due to the low returns to many northern systems on Kodiak Island.

The Sockeye Salmon run in the Buskin River was poor and did not meet its lower escapement goal, cumulative count of 4,274 fish (escapement goal 5,000 to 8,000 fish).

Chinook Salmon returns to the Karluk River have concluded and the stock did not meet the lower escapement goal with a total escapement 3,150 fish as of August 19. To protect this fish stock, State and Federal managers issued an emergency order and special action closing the Karluk River to subsistence fishing to Chinook Salmon. Chinook Salmon returns to the Ayakulik River also did not meet its lower escapement goal with a total count of 2,149 fish as of August 19. To protect both the Karluk and Ayakulik River fish stock, State and Federal managers issued an emergency order and special action closing both systems to subsistence fishing for the entire season.

Coho Salmon have arrived around the island a little earlier than normal showing up as jumpers in front of big streams and in fishing nets. Coho Salmon are an important subsistence resource to many Kodiak Island residents as well as enjoyment to harvest by rod and reel. Subsistence users enjoy putting them up by canning, freezing and smoking or drying.

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 17 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. To date, 156,078 late-run Sockeye Salmon were enumerated through August 18 where 190,000 – 320,000 fish were forecast between August 14 to August 20. Subsistence fishing activity is reported to be low and poor weather is affecting fishing opportunities and communications.

The Chinook Salmon count as of August 18 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 near 5.6 million, of which 3.4 million were Sockeye Salmon. 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 133,118 fish through August 19, meeting the escapement goal.

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

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

The summer season is over in the Alaskan portion of the drainage. The Summer Chum passage at Pilot Station through July 18 was 1.6 million, just below the median of 1.9 million. The Chinook Salmon assessment is indicating a total run abundance near the lower end of the preseason forecast with approximately 162,000 passing the Pilot Station sonar. Chinook Salmon passage past the Eagle sonar is winding down and will likely switch to fall chum assessment next week. At this time 58,000 Chinook Salmon have been estimated to have passed the sonar. This is enough to meet the Canadian Interim Management Escapement Goal and harvest sharing commitments. Initial summer season management was focused on conserving Chinook Salmon. However, as the season

progressed and confidence in assessment strengthened, subsistence restrictions were relaxed for both salmon species as well as other harvest opportunities for Summer Chum Salmon.

Fall Season Outlook

The 2018 Fall Chum Salmon inseason run projection is still on track 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. The Coho Salmon run appears to be coming in well below average at this time, which is below expectations.

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 19 of 1,848, above the median of 1,221. The Mt. Village Test Fishery (MVTF) began on July 18 and has a cumulative CPUE through August 19 of 1,833, above the median of 1,558. The Pilot Station sonar transitioned to fall season assessment on July 19 and has a cumulative passage of 471,637 through August 18, near the median of 470,680. The Fall Chum Salmon passage is nearing the average $\frac{3}{4}$ point at the Pilot Station sonar. The Chandalar River sonar is operational, however, it's still too early to assess.

Coho Salmon typically overlap the second half of the Fall Chum Salmon run. The Lower Yukon Test Fishery (LYTF) which has a cumulative Coho Salmon CPUE through August 19 of 106, below the median of 242. The Mt. Village Test Fishery (MVTF) began on July 18 and has a cumulative Coho Salmon CPUE through August 19 of 287, below the median of 424. The Pilot Station sonar transitioned to fall season assessment on July 19 and has a cumulative Coho Salmon passage of 29,327 through August 18, below the median of 54,683. The Coho Salmon passage is nearing the average mid-point at the Pilot Station sonar.

Fall Season Management Actions

On 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. District 1 also transitioned to fall season management on July 15 with subsistence fishing opened 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 during commercial fishing openings. On 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 as the run progressed through District 4 and Subdistricts 5-A, 5-B, and 5-C from two, 48-hour periods per week to 5 days per week and then to 7 days per

week on August 16. In the lower and middle portions of Subdistrict 5-D, subsistence fishing was relaxed to 7 days per week with 7.5" or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels on August 9, and on August 16 in upper Subdistrict 5-D.

Twelve fall season commercial periods have occurred in each of Districts 1 and 2 so far this season with a preliminary combined harvest of 195,072 Fall Chum Salmon and 34,724 Coho Salmon. Subdistrict 4-A has had one fall season commercial period with an estimated harvest of 596 Chum Salmon. No additional commercial periods are anticipated for Subdistrict 4-A. Commercial fishing is open 24-hours per day, seven days per week in Subdistricts 5-B and 5-C. This is a small scale commercial fishery with an expected harvest of around 2,000 Fall Chum Salmon.

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 eleventh YR DFA weekly teleconference was held on August 14 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 YR DFA 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:

Due to technical issues, the Bethel test fishery ended operations on August 16, 2018. There are currently no restrictions on the Kuskokwim River.

Kuskokwim Weir Chinook Counts:

Kwethluk River weir Chinook Salmon counts as of August 16, 2018 is at 2,424. In 2017 and 2016, Chinook Salmon counts for the Kwethluk River were at 7,361 and 3,391 respectively.

Kogrukluk River weir Chinook Salmon counts as of August 16, 2018 is at 5,464. In 2017 and 2016, Chinook Salmon counts were at 9,662 and 7,034, respectively.

Salmon River Pitka Fork weir Chinook Salmon counts as of August 11, 2018 is at 5,317. In 2017 and 2016 Chinook Salmon counts were at 7,908 and 6,300, respectively.

Test Fisheries:

As of August 16, the cumulative catch per unit of effort (CPUE) of Chinook Salmon at the Alaska Department of Fish and Game's Bethel Test Fishery is 665. Cumulative CPUE on this date during 2017 and 2016 were 373 and 687, respectively.

Cumulative CPUE for Chum Salmon is at 8,207. Cumulative CPUE on this date during 2017 and 2016 were 6,757 and 3,882 respectively.

Cumulative CPUE for Sockeye is at 2,274. Cumulative CPUE on this date during 2017 and 2016 were 2,686 and 2,449, respectively.

Cumulative CPUE for Coho is at 887. Cumulative CPUE on this date during 2017 and 2016 were 2,112 and 2,266, 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/>

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:

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Norton Sound District

The Norton Sound commercial silver salmon harvest is on track to break last year's record harvest of 191,000 silvers. There have been 148 permit holders fishing so far this season – the most since 1993 when 153 permit holders fished. The ADF&G forecast was for a well above average harvest of 170,000 to 220,000 silvers. Last year was the only year that exceeded 170,000 silvers caught. If moderate weather prevails, the harvest should go over 200,000 silvers.

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 silver salmon schedule for fresh waters.

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. The silver salmon sport fishing limit has been raised to 10 silvers daily and 10 silvers in possession in the Unalakleet River drainage.

Commercial Fishing: Cumulative catches are 500 kings, 230,000 chums, 39,000 pinks, 2,900 sockeyes and 168,000 silvers by 148 permit holders. Commercial fishing time will be set in consultation with the buyer.

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 are 260 king, 103,000 chum, 19,000 pink, 1,600 sockeye and 98,000 silver salmon by 76 permit holders. The silver harvest is the third highest in history and on track for a record.

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 project was pulled on August 9 and the cumulative counts were 3,300 king, 127,000 chum and 58,000 silver salmon. The silver count was a record.

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 through August 16 were 2,577 king, 26,000 chum, 500,000 pink and 12,000 silver salmon. The silver count is the second highest in over 20 years.

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 are 23 king, 40,000 chum, 2,500 pink, 470 sockeye and 51,000 silver salmon by 34 permit holders. The silver catch has been a record.

Shaktoolik Sonar/Tower – A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance from Fish & Game has no escapement goals established. The cumulative counts through August 16

were 1,035 king, 50,000 chum, 800,000 pink and 36,000 silver salmon. The silver count is a record 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 are 45 king, 13,700 chum, 1,000 pink, 160 sockeye and 1,500 silver salmon harvested by 12 permit holders. This season, Norton Bay has not been having the big catches like the other subdistricts. The chum harvest is ranked tenth highest and the silver harvest might reach tenth highest, but it will be less than one-third of recent 5-year average harvests that had had the 4 highest harvests in history.

Inglutalik River Tower – A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance from ADF&G. No escapement goals have been established. The cumulative counts through August 16 were 200 king, 28,000 chum, 20,000 pink, 100 sockeye and 2,100 silver salmon. In only two years has counting continued into mid-august, but most years had a much higher silver count before counting was suspended.

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 are 122 king, 38,000 chum, 9,000 pink, 340 sockeye and 12,500 silver salmon harvested by 34 permit holders. The silver salmon catch is already the fifth highest in history.

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 through August 17 were 87 king, 41,000 chum, 1.8 million pink and 7,800 silver salmon. The silver count is third highest in the 2000s.

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 are 31 king, 24,000 chum, 4,000 pink, 70 sockeye and 1,200 silver salmon harvested by 18 permit holders. The silver harvest may fall short of a Top 10 harvest. Fishing participation has been down to three or less as more permit holders have headed to other subdistricts to fish.

Fish River Tower - A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance from Fish & Game. No escapement goals have been established. The cumulative counts through August 17 were 72 king, 45,000 chum, 2.7 million pink and 10,500 silver salmon. The silver count is the second highest in the four years of counting this late into the season.

Subdistrict 1 (Nome)

Subsistence Fishing: A record 600 subsistence salmon permits have been issued this year. A subsistence net fishing schedule is in effect in all fresh water subsistence areas from 6 PM Wednesday until 6 PM Monday. Marine waters are open seven days per week. There are no catch limits in the marine waters. Catch limits in the fresh waters vary by river and can be found on the back of the subsistence permit. Cast nets and dip nets can be used during the net fishing schedule, but only in the subsistence areas. Effective August 16, beach seines are no longer allowed.

Commercial Fishing: The cumulative catch has been 12 king, 9,900 chum, 3,500 pink, 250 sockeye and 3,300 silver salmon by 6 permit holders. The silver salmon harvest is the second highest in history.

Solomon River Weir – A Fish & Game project, has no escapement goals yet established. The Project was pulled August 10 and the cumulative counts were 11 king, 3,400 chum, 460,000 pink, 18 sockeye and 162 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 through August 17 were 9 king, 7,400 chum, 900,000 pink, 190 sockeye and 900 silver salmon. This is a first year project.

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 through August 17 were 50 king, 4,900 chum, 3.2 million pink, 84 sockeye and 1,300 silver salmon. The pink count is over 2 million above the previous record set 10 years ago. The silver count is the third highest in the 26-year history of the project.

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 through August 17 were 1 king, 2,800 chum, 450,000 pink, 54 sockeye and 160 silver salmon. The silver count is average.

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 through August 16 were 88 king, 33,000 chum, 48,000 pink, 33,400 sockeye and 240 silver salmon. The sockeye count was the eighth highest in the 16-year history of the project. The project has been pulled.

Kotzebue District

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

Commercial Fishing: The commercial catch through Friday, August 17 was 548,000 chum salmon caught by 94 permit holders. That catch ranks the fifth highest in history and is on track to exceed 600,000 chums (the ADF&G forecast was for a harvest of 400,000 to 600,000 chums).

Kobuk River Test Fish - Fish & Game project. The Kobuk River test chum catches are above the long-term average and tracking nearly 10% ahead of last year's catches.

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