

**FISHERIES UPDATE FOR THE WEEK OF AUGUST 12-18 2019.** Report #12  
Compiled by George Pappas - (907) 786-3822, [George\\_Pappas@fws.gov](mailto:George_Pappas@fws.gov) Office of  
Subsistence Management, USFWS.

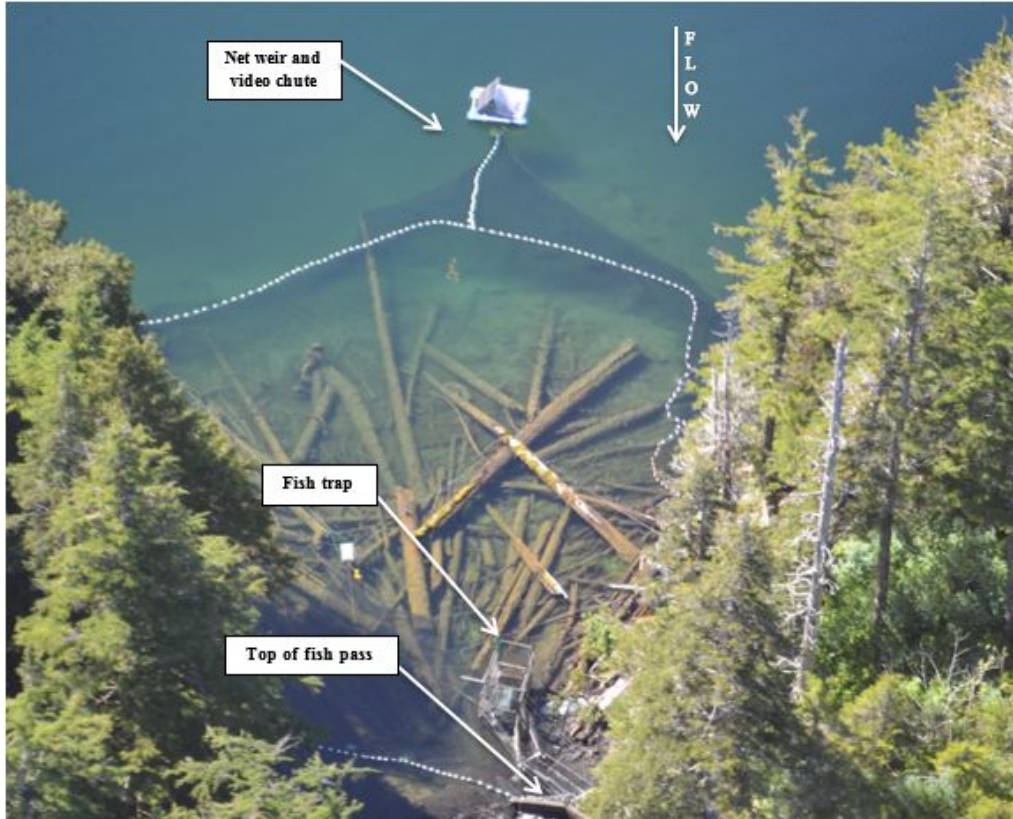
The purpose of the weekly fisheries update is to provide the reader with an overall summary of the status of subsistence related fisheries throughout the state of Alaska. The target audience is the Federal Subsistence Board and its Staff Committee. The report was compiled with the assistance of the Federal 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. Please keep in mind, many of the authors do not have alternates or are deployed in the field on occasion and do not have access to communications to submit a weekly report. Web links have been included to provide additional information. You may obtain additional information on a fishery of particular interest by contacting the in-season manager, provided contacts, follow the provided web links, or contact me.

### **SOUTHEAST ALASKA**

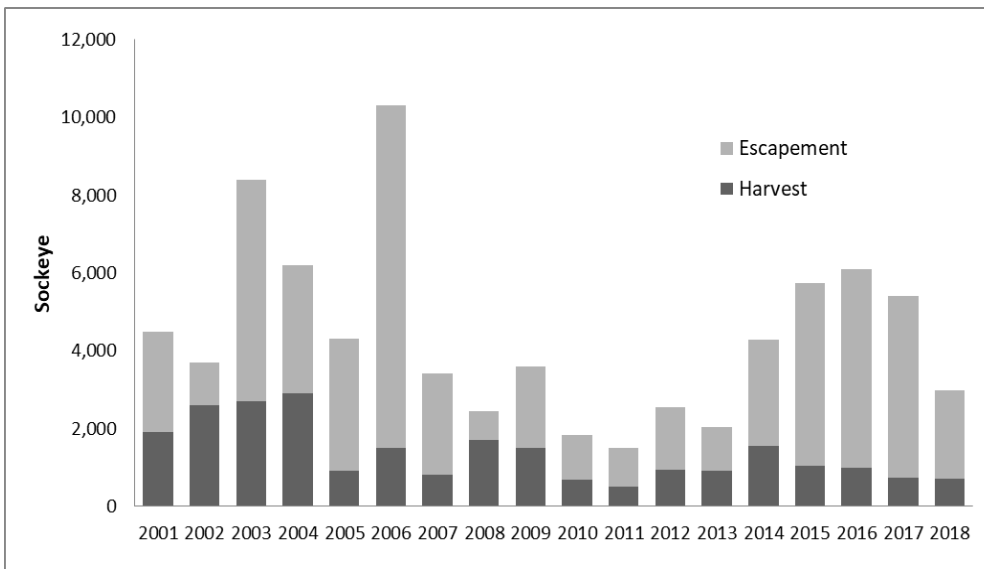
**Sitka and Hoonah Area – Justin Koller, Forest Service, Tongass National Forest**  
Justin Koller, (907)747-4297, [justin.koller@usda.gov](mailto:justin.koller@usda.gov)

Author Deployed, no current report submitted this week.

**Falls Lake** - The Forest Service and the Organized Village of Kake operate the Falls Lake trap and video net weir which was operating as of June 26. Sockeye Salmon began entering the lake on July 23, which is over a week later than usual. The water temperature peaked at 19C (66F) on July 14, which may have delayed escapement. The temperature has been fluctuating between 17-18C recently. As of August 11, 240 sockeye have been counted using the fish pass which is below average for this date. Total escapement is probably about 600 because some use the falls to enter the lake and are counted on the net weir video. About 450 have been harvested in the subsistence fishery. The final escapement estimate in 2018 was 2,261 Sockeye Salmon while the final subsistence and sport harvest in the marine terminal area was 720. Subsistence harvest accounted for 90% of terminal area harvest.



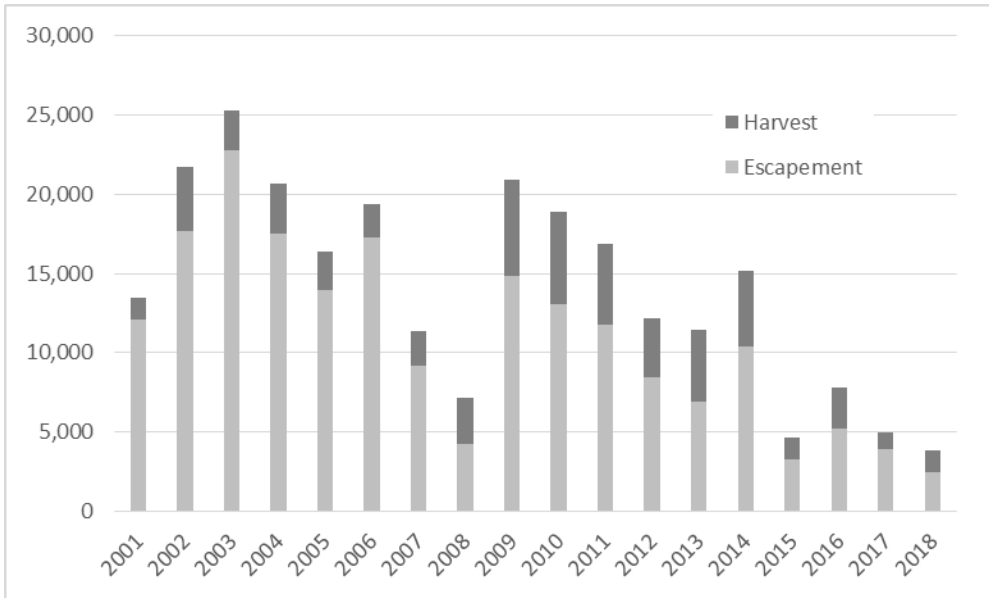
**Figure 1.** Aerial photo of the Falls Lake outlet illustrating the typical location of weir equipment.



**Figure 2.** Escapement plus harvest equals total terminal run of Sockeye Salmon at Falls Lake, 2001-2018.

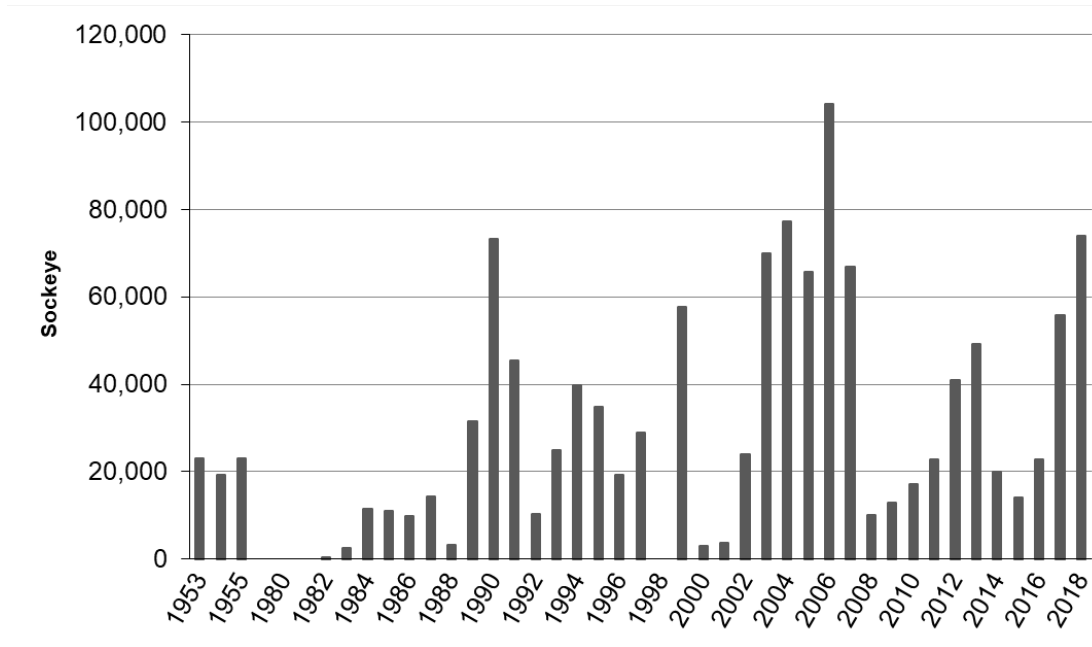
**Klag Bay** - The Sitka Tribe of Alaska operates the Sockeye Salmon monitoring weir at Klag Bay which was operational the last week in June. As of August 11, 1,484 Sockeye Salmon have been counted at the weir, which is below average for this date. The State

subsistence fishery in Klag Bay has harvested 1,302 sockeye. In 2018, approximately 2,444 sockeye migrated past the weir while an estimated 1,387 were harvested in the marine terminal area subsistence and sport fishery. Subsistence harvest accounted for over 99% of terminal area harvest.



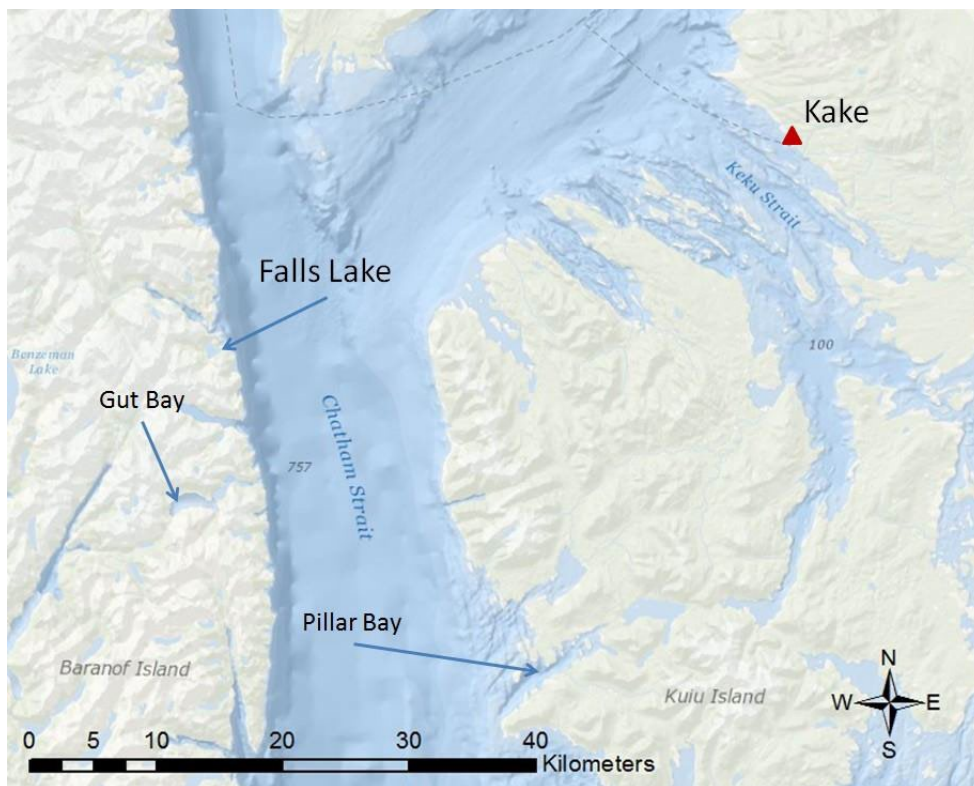
**Figure 3.** Reported harvest, escapement, and exploitation rate for Klag Lake Sockeye Salmon, 2001-2018.

**Redoubt Lake** - The Forest Service operates the Redoubt Lake weir which was operational June 15. As of August 11, 49,431 Sockeye Salmon have been counted which is above average. On July 9, in accordance with the Redoubt Lake Management Plan, the individual/household subsistence sockeye possession limit was set at 25 and the individual/household subsistence sockeye annual limit was set at 100. There are many people catching Sockeye Salmon at Redoubt Lake outlet and almost all reports indicate excellent fishing opportunity. Over 5,000 Sockeye Salmon have been caught in Redoubt Bay during recent commercial seine openings.



**Figure 4.** Annual Sockeye Salmon expanded escapement into Redoubt Lake for years with data: 1953 to 1955, 1982 to 1997, and 1999 to 2018. The weir was not operated in 1998.

**Gut Bay** - The Forest Service and the Organized Village of Kake began monitoring escapement and harvest of Gut Bay Sockeye Salmon this year. Gut Bay is located south of Falls Lake on Baranof Island and is an important source of Sockeye Salmon for the village of Kake. Very little is known about the magnitude of this run. The weirs were installed on June 20 and as of August 11, 609 Sockeye Salmon have been counted. About 200 have been harvested in the State subsistence fishery in Gut Bay. The water temperature was 9C during project setup on June 20. The water temperature peaked at 15C on July 18 and is now about 12C. This drainage is probably one of the cooler Sockeye Salmon systems because the lake is small and does not receive much solar energy.



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

**Sitka Sound Pacific Herring** – The commercial, subsistence, and spawning season for Pacific Herring in Sitka Sound occurs about mid-March through mid-April. The commercial sac roe herring fishery did not occur in 2018. The guideline harvest level (GHL) was 12,869, however, marketable size fish could not be located in high enough quantity to warrant a fishery. Accounts from the Sitka Tribe of Alaska and other harvesters indicate good quantity and quality of subsistence roe harvest. Miles of shoreline receiving herring spawn indicates the spawning season was about average. However, preliminary estimates of spawn-extent from shore, and deposition are encouraging and may bolster the post spawn biomass population estimate. This estimate will be available this Fall.

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

**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 Stikine River Federal subsistence Coho Salmon fishery is open until October 1. The estimated cumulative Stikine River Federal subsistence salmon harvest from 117 fishing permits is 35 large Chinook, and 1,800 Sockeye Salmon. Sockeye are beginning to be harvested in Kah Sheets River according to reports from subsistence harvesters. Harvest estimates for the Kah Sheets River are not available.

There was a restricted purse seine fishery opening in District 6-C and 6-D. The fisheries will be open to purse seining from 6:00 a.m. Tuesday, August 20, 2019 to 9:00 p.m., Wednesday, August 21, 2019. More information can be found at [ADF&G press release](#). The total commercial purse sein harvest estimate in district 7 (Anita Bay) is 30,000 chum salmon. Commercial purse seine harvest estimates for statistical week 31 are below:

	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	Total
District 6	0	1,600	1,600	170,000	1,500	174,700

There will be a restricted drift gillnet opportunity in Districts 6 and 8 open from 12:01 p.m. Sunday, August 18, 2019 to 12:00 p.m., Thursday, August 22, 2019. More details can be found in the [ADF&G press release](#).

	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	Total
District 6	30	2,000	5,300	91,000	10,000	108,330
District 8	25	150	400	1,300	7,500	9,375

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

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

As of August 9, only 323 Sockeye Salmon have passed through the Sitkoh Lake weir. Typically, 5,000-10,000 Sockeye enter the lake to spawn in a normal year. While it should be approximately the peak of the run, low and warm water may be affecting the spawning migration. We are hoping that more fish show up with the rain forecast for the upcoming weekend.





*Figure 1. Video capture of a low-flying float plane over the Sitkoh Lake video weir.*



*Figure 2. Video capture of a Sockeye Salmon passing through the Sitkoh Lake video weir.*

**Neva Lake sockeye salmon:** A crew from the Forest Service and the Hoonah Indian Association (HIA) installed the Neva Lake weir near Excursion Inlet on June 19. This

swim-through video weir is remotely monitored and maintained by a HIA crew living in Excursion Inlet. Live video from the weir is available on the internet at <http://nevalake.ddns.net:81>. Viewers can see underwater views of the video chute, site views from the surveillance cameras, and view recent motion-triggered clips.

As of August 15, 1,459 Sockeye Salmon have been counted passing through the Neva Lake weir. Like the rest of Southeast Alaska, water levels have been extremely low, so we are hoping for a surge of fish to come with the next rain. Over the past few days, the crew has also been battling the beavers that are determined to plug the weir's video chute (Figures 3 and 4).



*Figure 3. A beaver places a stone in the video chute at the Neva Lake weir.*





Figure 4. The Neva Lake weir crew removes beaver-placed material from the video chute the following morning.

**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)**

To date, the 2019 Federal subsistence salmon fishery for Southeast Alaska and Yakutat areas has had 211 permits issued to Federally-qualified subsistence users for the fishery. Many subsistence users are now currently engaging in subsistence fishing for Sockeye Salmon within State managed portions of Klawock Inlet, Sarkar/Deweyville, Hetta Inlet and Karta. Most of these fisheries are closed, with exception to Hetta Inlet that will close at the end of the month.

Although the Chinook Salmon abundance index was estimated to be very low this year, Chinook Salmon are still present in the local Craig and Klawock area resulting in many subsistence users actively fishing under sport fishing regulations. Coho Salmon numbers are slowly building in outside marine water areas. Halibut, Lingcod and other bottom fish are also being harvested by local subsistence users under Sport fishing regulations. A closure to demersal rockfish on the outside of coast of Prince of Wales was implemented on July 25<sup>th</sup>.

The commercial troll fishery opening for Chinook Salmon closed at 11:59 p.m., on August 14th, 2019, harvesting the remaining 25,000 Chinook Salmon left from the original allocation. All boats will need to offload any harvested Chinook Salmon before resuming commercial fishing efforts for other species of salmon.

Commercial seine fishing effort targeting Pink Salmon continues both offshore in District 4, as well as inside areas in Districts 1 and 3. The Kendrick Bay terminal seine fishery for Chum Salmon has been occurring weekly. The District 1 drift gillnet fishery is ongoing with weekly openings. The Neets Bay terminal harvest area has been closed to commercial fishing for Chum Salmon in order to allow for brood stock needs to be met.

Estimated commercial harvests of salmon in Districts 1-4 are: 21,230 Chinook, 296,875 Sockeye, 120,350 Coho, 11,453,600 Pink and 980,350 Chum Salmon.

Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program (FRMP) funded monitoring projects for 2019 Sockeye Salmon returns are happening at Hetta Lake and Eek Lake. Cumulative escapement at Hetta Lake is: 2765 Sockeye Salmon. At Eek Lake, the total cumulative counts is: 93 Sockeye and 12 Coho Salmon.

The Klawock Lake weir has been operational since July 19<sup>th</sup>. To date, the following number of fish have been passed: 1221 Sockeye, 103 Coho and 21 Pink Salmon.

### **Southeast Alaska Web Links**

*Tongass National Forest News Room* <http://www.fs.usda.gov/news/tongass/news-events>

*Federal Subsistence Fisheries Regulations for Southeastern Alaska Area*  
[http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish\\_shell/upload/Southeast.pdf](http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish_shell/upload/Southeast.pdf)

*ADF&G Sport and Personal Use Fishing News Release and Emergency Order Link*  
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/EONR/index.cfm?ADFG=region.R1>

*ADF&G Commercial Fisheries News Release and Emergency Order Link*  
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.main>

*Weekly ADF&G Sport Fishing Reports for Southeast Alaska*  
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/FishingReports/index.cfm?ADFG=R1.home>

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

## **SOUTHCENTRAL ALASKA**

### **PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND – COPPER RIVER**

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

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

Links:

ADF&G Miles Lake daily sonar estimates

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

NVE's Chinook Escapement Monitoring project in the Copper River

<http://eyak.fishscan.com/Summary/DailySummary.aspx>

ADF&G Copper River In-season Commercial Harvest Estimates

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

ADF&G Gulkana River counting tower

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

ADF&G Emergency Orders and News Releases

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

**PWS and Copper River Delta – Milo Burcham, Chugach National Forest, Cordova. 6 June 2017. Milo Burcham (907) 424-4759 [mburcham@fs.fed.us](mailto:mburcham@fs.fed.us)**

A total of 54 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 2018 resulting in the reported harvest of 255 coho and 96 sockeye from fresh waters of the Copper River Delta. Silvers are beginning to show up in streams of the Copper River Delta and Prince William Sound, however low water and warm temperatures continue.

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

This will be the final report for the Cook Inlet area for 2019.

A total of 347 permits for Cook Inlet Federal subsistence fisheries have been issued to qualified rural residents through August 17. This includes 256 Household Annual permits (KKTCI3), 81 General Subsistence Fishing permits (KKTCI2), and 10 Designated Fisher permits.

The 2019 subsistence dip net fisheries for salmon began on the Kenai and Kasilof rivers June 15 and June 16, respectively. Harvest reported through August 17 in the dip net fishery at Russian River Falls is 1,356 Sockeye Salmon. Harvest reported through August 17 in the Kasilof River dip net fishery is 29 Sockeye Salmon.

The Kasilof River experimental community gillnet fishery began on June 16 and continues through August 15. Harvest reported for the season includes 553 Sockeye Salmon and 6 Pink Salmon.

Regulatory periods for the Kenai River community gillnet fishery are from July 1 through August 15 and from September 10 – 30. Harvest reported for the July 1 to August 15 period includes 2,832 Sockeye, 6 Coho, and 1 Pink salmon.

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

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

**Kodiak Island Area – Michael Brady, Refuge Manager, - Kodiak NWR**  
(907) 487-0226 or [michael\\_brady@fws.gov](mailto:michael_brady@fws.gov) or Kevin Van Hatten (907) 487-0230  
[Kevin\\_VanHatten@fws.gov](mailto:Kevin_VanHatten@fws.gov)

No report submitted for period.

***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**

All of the assessments of salmon returns are conducted by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G), and provide the basis for any inseason assessment and management.

Bristol Bay:

All rivers have met escapement goals.

Sockeye Salmon escapement counts for the date of August 15 are:

- 820,458 fish on the Alagnak River (weir pulled on July 24)



- 2,326,176 fish on the Egegik River (weir pulled on July 23)
- 256,074 fish on the Igushik River (weir pulled on July 27)
- 2,371,242 fish on the Kvichak River (weir pulled on July 25)
- 2,911,470 fish on the Naknek River (weir pulled on July 23)
- 705,029 fish on the Nushagak River, 47,882 Chinook Salmon.(weir pulled on August 15)
- 351,846 fish on the Togiak River (weir pulled on August 8)
- 1,547,748 fish on the Ugashik River (weir pulled on July 28)
- 2,073,276 fish on the Wood River (weir pulled on July 21)

The preliminary commercial harvest estimate for August 18 is 44.5 million, with Sockeye Salmon accounting for 97% of the harvest.

#### Chignik:

The cumulative weir count as of August 18 is 633,663 Sockeye Salmon with 345,918 fish attributed to the early run and 287,745 attributed to the late-run. The Chignik River weir was pulled on August 19. The early-run nearly met the escapement goal of 350,000 fish. The late-run met the lower end of the escapement goal of 200,000 fish. There is an in-river goal of 20,000 additional fish for late run subsistence needs, 10,000 in August and 10,000 in September. The August in-river goal has been met.

Chinook Salmon counts enumerated at the ADF&G weir as of August 18 are 1,517 fish. The Chinook Salmon run has met the lower end of the escapement goal, which has not been met since 2016.

The ADFG has scheduled commercial periods in all Chignik Management Area districts to target the late-run Sockeye Salmon, Pink, and Chum Salmon. The current harvest estimate through August 14 is 1.6 million fish; 903,484 Pink Salmon and 494,235 Sockeye Salmon composing the majority of the catch.

#### Alaska Peninsula and Aleutian Islands:

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.

Sockeye Salmon escapement count for the date of August 18 are:

- 115,000 fish on the Nelson River, 11,653 Chinook Salmon (weir pulled July 28)
- 444,596 fish on the Bear River
- 74,345 fish on the Ilnik River (weir pulled on July 18).
- 4,367 fish on Orzinski River (south peninsula, weir pulled on August 9).
- 71,000 fish on the Sandy River (weir pulled on July 24).

Commercial periods have been scheduled and implemented with the total commercial harvest as of August 18 at 22.4 million fish, with Pink Salmon accounting for 72% of the harvest.

Aleutian Island fisheries are projected to provide for escapement and subsistence harvests.

***Federal Subsistence Fisheries Regulations for Bristol Bay Area***  
[http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish\\_shell/upload/Bristol.pdf](http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish_shell/upload/Bristol.pdf)

***Federal Subsistence Fisheries Regulations for Chignik Area***  
[http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish\\_shell/upload/chignik.pdf](http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish_shell/upload/chignik.pdf)

### **Southcentral Alaska Web Links**

***Federal Subsistence Management Fisheries News Releases***  
<http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/news/fishing/index.cfm>

***ADF&G Sport and Personal Use Fishing News Release and Emergency Order link***  
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=fishingSportFishingInfo.R2>

***ADF&G Commercial Fisheries News Release and Emergency Order Link***  
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.main>

***Weekly ADF&G Sport Fishing Reports for Southcentral Alaska***  
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/FishingReports/index.cfm?ADFG=R2.Home>

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

### **Yukon River**

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

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

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

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

### **Summer Season Summary**

The summer season is essentially over in the Alaskan portion of the drainage. The Summer Chum passage at Pilot Station through July 18 was 1.4 million, just below the median of 1.9 million. The preliminary Summer Chum Salmon run size is projected to total about 1.75 million fish for the season. This includes the number estimated to have passed the Pilot Station sonar, the Andreafsky River, and harvest below the sonar. Although below average and below the preseason outlook, a run of this size is large

enough to provide for escapement, subsistence harvests, and other uses. The Chinook Salmon run is projecting a near average size (1995-2018) of 220,000 fish at this time. This is just below the upper end of the preseason forecast of 168,000 to 241,000 fish and is better than 2018. Based on the Chinook Salmon passage past the Pilot Station sonar and the harvest restrictions that were implemented early in the season, managers were anticipating that the 2019 Chinook Salmon run should be adequate to meet escapement goals and the Canadian border passage objective. Unfortunately, both Chinook and Summer Chum Salmon escapement projects are not showing the returns expected for runs of these sizes, with the exception of the East Fork Andreafsky weir. The Chena River did not meet its minimum escapement goal, while the Salcha River did meet its minimum escapement goal, but its return was still below average. It's been speculated that near record high water temperatures in the Yukon drainage may be having a negative impact on Chinook and Summer Chum salmon migration. Fishermen in tributaries, particularly the Koyukuk River, have been reporting dead, pre-spawn Summer Chum Salmon floating in the rivers.

Chinook Salmon passage past the Eagle sonar is winding down and will likely switch to fall chum assessment when apportionment begins to show that fall chum are arriving. At this time 46,500 Chinook Salmon have been estimated to have passed the sonar. This is enough to meet the lower end of the Canadian escapement goal range of 42,500 – 55,000, but not enough to meet our harvest sharing commitments.

The four Canadian escapement projects reporting at this time are the Upper Porcupine River, Big Salmon River, and Pelly River sonars, and the Whitehorse Dam fish ladder. The Porcupine River sonar is slightly above average, the Big Salmon sonar is below average, the Pelly River sonar is about average, and the Whitehorse Dam fish ladder is below average.

### **Fall Season Outlook**

The latest 2019 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 800,000 fish. This level of abundance is typically sufficient to meet escapement and subsistence needs with a surplus available for commercial and personal use purposes. The Yukon River Drainage Fall Chum Salmon Management Plan went into effect for most of the Alaskan portion of the Yukon drainage. The Lower Yukon Test Fishery (LYTF) began fall season operations on July 16 and is below average at this time. The Mountain Village Test Fishery (MVTF) began on July 18 and is above average at this time. The Pilot Station sonar began reporting all chum salmon as Fall Chum Salmon for management purposes on July 19. The estimated passage past the sonar through August 17 is 544,126 Chum Salmon, above the median of 437,627. However, genetic analysis of the first fall season strata of 208,000 Chum Salmon shows that it was made up of 88% Summer Chum Salmon. The second fall season strata of 271,000 Chum Salmon shows that it was made up of 38% Summer Chum Salmon. Based upon average genetic proportions, it appears that the Fall Chum Salmon run could be coming in 10 days later than normal. A third strata has been passing this weekend.

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

### **Fall Season Management Actions**

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

Six fall season commercial periods have occurred in District 1, and six have occurred in District 2. Preliminary harvests estimates are 142,000 Chum Salmon, 15,700 Coho Salmon, and 473 Chinook Salmon.

### **Consultation**

Extensive public outreach and consultation was performed during the fall of 2018 and spring of 2019 to inform and seek input from Yukon River fishermen and stakeholders. Outreach has continued through the summer via the YRDFA weekly teleconferences. The eleventh teleconference occurred on August 16. Fishermen in Districts 1-4 are waiting for fall chum. Most fishermen in Districts 5 are done with a few still fishing for dog food and a few fishermen in upper Subdistrict 5-D still fishing for a few last Chinook Salmon.

### **KUSKOKWIM RIVER**

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

The Kuskokwim River main stem currently has no restrictions. All tributaries of the Kuskokwim River area still closed to the retention of Chinook Salmon until further notice.

As of August 15, 2019 the escapement of Chinook salmon at the Kwethluk weir has met its lower end of its escapement goal at 6,897. The 2018 and 2017 Kwethluk weir counts for this day for Chinook Salmon were 2,424 and 7,351 respectively.

Chum salmon counts at the Kwethluk weir are at 39,660. The 2018 and 2017 Kwethluk weir counts for this day for Chum salmon were 28,975 and 52,914 respectively.

Sockeye salmon counts at the Kwethluk weir are at 27,633. The 2018 and 2017 Kwethluk weir counts for this day for Sockeye salmon were 5,706 and 28,587 respectively.



Coho salmon counts at the Kwethluk weir are at 4,037. The 2018 and 2017 Kwethluk weir counts for this day for Sockeye salmon were 569 and 3,106 respectively.

**Test Fisheries:**

As of August 18, 2019 the CPUE for Chinook at the Bethel test fish is at 850. The 2018 and 2017 Chinook CPUE for this day were at 667 and 373, respectively.

As of August 18, 2019 the CPUE for Chum at the Bethel test fish is at 4,946. The 2018 and 2017 Chum CPUE for this day were at 8,212 and 6,770, respectively.

As of August 18, 2019 the CPUE for Sockeye at the Bethel test fish is at 1,747. The 2018 and 2017 Sockeye CPUE for this day were at 2,275 and 2,688, respectively.

As of August 18, 2019 the CPUE for Coho at the Bethel test fish is at 1,446. The 2018 and 2017 Sockeye CPUE for this day were at 901 and 2,415, 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)

***NEW = Kuskokwim River Updates Hosted on OSM Website***

<http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/kuskokwim.cfm>

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **Northwest Alaska**

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### **Norton Sound District**

Counting Projects: High water has prevented most salmon escapement counting projects being operational. Only the Pilgrim River weir operated by Norton Sound Economic Development Corporation (NSEDC) and the Kwiniuk River tower are operational. The crew at Pilgrim River is still counting hundreds of sockeyes passing each day. Because of limited escapement data, the department is using harvest-based management by comparing the commercial silver salmon catch with previous years to determine whether additional fishing time is warranted. Catch data indicates an above average silver salmon run. Catch rates, escapements, processor capacity. And weather will be monitored to adjust fishing time if necessary.

Commercial Fishing: The commercial catch through Tuesday morning August 13 was 1,360 kings, 6,100 sockeyes, 75,000 pinks, 154,000 chums and 56,000 silvers. The king harvest is the highest in 20 years. The sockeye harvest is a record. The tail end of the chum run was well above the recent 5-year average of 141,000 chums, but will fall short of the forecast of 170,000 to 220,000 chums. The silver catch has picked up and is now above average.

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

Subsistence Fishing: The coastal waters are open to subsistence fishing 7 days a week.

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

Subsistence Fishing: Net fishing is open seven days a week. Gillnet length allowed is 50 fathoms except in the Unalakleet River only 25 fathoms is allowed.

Commercial Fishing: The cumulative catch is 900 kings, 3,000 sockeyes, 29,000 pinks, 57,000 chums and 34,000 silvers by 65 permit holders. The silver catch is above average.

Commercial salmon fishing opened in the Subdistrict for two 48-hour periods from 6 PM Tuesday, August 13 until 6 PM Thursday, August 15 and from 6 PM Friday, August 16 until 6 PM Sunday, August 18. Permit holders were limited to 100 fathoms of net in aggregate length.

**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 weir has been out since August 3 and will be pulled when water levels drop. The cumulative counts prior to the project becoming compromised are 6,400 kings, 1,100 sockeyes, 64,000 chums, 11,000 silvers and 1.1 million pinks\*. The silver count is the third highest to that date.

\*Picket spacing at the Unalakleet weir allows most pinks to pass through without being counted.

**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 tower has been out since August 2. The cumulative counts prior to the project becoming compromised are 3,300 kings, 11,000 chums, 2.1 million pinks and 1,500 silvers. The silver count was above average for that date.

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

Subsistence Fishing: Net fishing is open seven days a week.

Commercial Fishing: The cumulative catch was 300 kings, 1,900 sockeyes, 19,000 pinks, 42,000 chums and 14,000 silvers by 32 permit holders. The silver catch was above average.

Commercial salmon fishing opened in the Subdistrict for two 48-hour periods from 6 PM Tuesday, August 13 until 6 PM Thursday, August 15 and from 6 PM Friday, August 16 until 6 PM Sunday, August 18. Permit holders were limited to 100 fathoms of net in aggregate length.

**Shaktoolik Sonar/Tower** – A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance from Fish & Game has no escapement goals established. The tower has been out since August 1. The cumulative counts prior to the project becoming compromised were 2,700 kings, 170 sockeyes, 29,000 chums, 4.2 million pinks and 5,100 silvers. The silver count is average.

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

Subsistence Fishing: Subsistence fishing is open 7 days a week.

Commercial Fishing: The cumulative catch was 7 kings, 100 sockeyes, 1,900 chums, and 1,100 pinks by 7 permit holders. No one has tried fishing in August.

Commercial salmon fishing opened in the Subdistrict for two 48-hour periods from 6 PM Tuesday, August 13 until 6 PM Thursday, August 15 and from 6 PM Friday, August 16 until 6 PM Sunday, August 18. Permit holders were limited to 100 fathoms of net in aggregate length.

**Inglutalik River Tower** – A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance from ADF&G. No escapement goals have been established. The project has been pulled. The cumulative counts prior to the project becoming compromised were 171 kings, 24,600 chums, 207,000 pinks and 900 silvers.

**Ungalik River Tower** – A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance of ADF&G. No escapement goals yet established. The project has been pulled. The cumulative counts prior to the project becoming compromised were 30 kings, 15,000 chums, 2.0 million pinks, and 3,300 silvers. This was the first year for the project.

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

Subsistence Fishing: Subsistence fishing is open seven days a week

Commercial Fishing: The cumulative catch was 100 kings, 530 sockeyes, 12,800 chums, 13,700 pinks and 3,600 silvers by 20 permit holders. The silver catch has been average.

Commercial salmon fishing opened in the Subdistrict for two 48-hour periods from 6 PM Tuesday, August 13 until 6 PM Thursday, August 15 and from 6 PM Friday, August 16 until 6 PM Sunday, August 18. Permit holders were limited to 100 fathoms of net in aggregate length.

**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 crew resumed counting on August 12 after being unable to count since August 3. The cumulative counts through August 12 were 111 kings, 18,000 chums, 665,000 pinks and 1,800 silvers.

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

Subsistence Fishing: Subsistence fishing is open seven days a week.

Commercial Fishing: The cumulative catch was 31 kings, 115 sockeyes, 25,000 chums, 7,500 pinks and 1,400 silvers by 12 permit holders. The silver catch has been average.

Commercial salmon fishing opened in the Subdistrict for two 48-hour periods from 6 PM Tuesday, August 13 until 6 PM Thursday, August 15 and from 6 PM Friday, August 16 until 6 PM Sunday, August 18. Permit holders were limited to 100 fathoms of net in aggregate length.

**Fish River Tower** - A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance from Fish & Game. No escapement goals have been established. The project has been pulled, Six days were counted from July 20-25. The cumulative counts were 26,200 chums, 800,000 pinks, and 3,200 silvers.



***Subdistrict 1 (Nome)***

Subsistence Fishing: Silver Salmon season regulations are in effect. Beach seines are no longer legal gear to harvest salmon. The marine waters are now open continuously and there are no catch limits in the marine waters. Gillnet lengths up to 300 feet are allowed. The net fishing schedule in all fresh water subsistence areas is from 6 PM Wednesday until 6 PM Monday. Gillnet length is limited to up to 50 feet and no more than one-half of any channel may be blocked at any one time. No drift gillnetting is allowed.

Subsistence salmon fishing permits are required, and stream specific harvest limits are listed on the permit.

Commercial Fishing: The cumulative catch was 24 kings, 509 sockeyes, 14,500 chums, 4,800 pinks and 3,100 silvers by 5 permit holders. The chum catch is the third highest on record and the silver catch has been average to above average.

Commercial salmon fishing opened in the Subdistrict for two 48-hour periods from 9 PM Tuesday, August 13 until 9 PM Thursday, August 15 and from 9 PM Friday, August 16 until 9 PM Sunday, August 18. Permit holders were limited to 100 fathoms of net in aggregate length.

**Solomon River Weir** – A Fish & Game project, has no escapement goals yet established. The weir has been out since August 2. The project has been pulled. The cumulative counts prior to the project becoming compromised were 27 sockeyes, 764 chums and 40,000 pinks and 45 silvers.

**Bonanza River Weir** – A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance from Fish & Game. No escapement goals have yet been established. The project has been pulled. The cumulative counts through July 30 were 8 kings, 9 sockeyes, 8,800 chums, 167,000 pinks and 150 silvers.

**Eldorado River Weir** – A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance from Fish & Game has an escapement goal of 6,000 – 9,200 chum salmon. The crew declared victory on July 30 before the high water hit, and pulled the weir out for the season. The cumulative counts prior to the project becoming compromised were 15 kings, 36 sockeyes, 28,000 chums and 57,000 pinks. The chum count is the fourth highest in over 20 years of counting.

**Nome River Weir** - A Fish and Game project with assistance from NSEDC. It has escapement goals of 1,600 – 5,300 chum salmon and 3,200 pink salmon. The weir has been out since August 2. The cumulative counts prior to the project becoming compromised were 6 kings, 9 sockeyes, 3,000 chums, 600,000 pinks, and 216 silvers.

**Snake River Weir** – A cooperative project between Fish & Game and NSEDC has an escapement goal of 2,000 – 4,200 chum salmon. The weir has been out since August 1.

The cumulative counts prior to the project becoming compromised were 1 king, 11 sockeyes, 2,100 chums, 100,000 pinks and 81 silvers.

### **Port Clarence District**

Subsistence Fishing: Gillnet and beach seining are open seven 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. These are: Pilgrim River - 3 king salmon per household; the department waived the sockeye limit on Tuesday, July 16; Salmon Lake - open by emergency order only - 200 sockeye salmon per household. The department waived the sockeye limit.

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 the 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 weir has been out since August 3. The cumulative counts prior to the project becoming compromised were 164 kings, 25,000 sockeyes, 11,000 chums, 355,000 pinks and 99 silvers.

### **Kotzebue District**

The closure to all subsistence and commercial fishing in the area offshore or the Kotzebue airport's main runway to one mile out in the ocean remains in effect until mid-October. Fishing boats and other marine vessels may still transit through the closed fishing area, but no fishing gear can be in the water within the closed area. The reason for the closure is that fishing often attracts birds that can create a hazardous situation for aircraft arriving at or departing from Kotzebue.

Subsistence Fishing: No other subsistence fishing restrictions are expected in 2019.

Commercial Fishing: The commercial catch has been average. The cumulative catch is 320,000 salmon and is on track for a top 15 harvest but will likely fall short of the departmental forecast of a 450,000 to 650,000 chum salmon harvest.

Commercial salmon fishing will be opened for 14 hours daily from 8 a.m. until 10 p.m. Sunday, August 11, through Friday, August 16, in the Kotzebue District.

**Kobuk River Test Fish** - a Fish and Game project. The Kobuk River test fish in Kiana has improved last week with robust catches and is now above the department's catch target objectives.

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