

**FISHERIES UPDATE FOR THE WEEK OF AUGUST 26 – September 1, 2018.**

Report #14 - Compiled by George Pappas - (907) 786-3822, [George\\_Pappas@fws.gov](mailto:George_Pappas@fws.gov)  
Office of Subsistence Management, USFWS.

The purpose of the weekly fisheries update is to provide the reader with an overall summary of the status of subsistence related fisheries throughout the state of Alaska. The target audience is the Federal Subsistence Board and its Staff Committee. The report was compiled with the assistance of the Federal in-season managers and OSM staff that provided weekly updated information by the close of business on Friday of the reporting week. My goal is to have the report sent by the close of business the following Monday. Web links have been included to provide additional information. You may obtain additional information on a fishery of particular interest by contacting the in-season manager, provided contacts, follow the provided web links, or contact me.

**SOUTHEAST ALASKA Sitka and Hoonah Area – Justin Koller, Forest Service, Tongass National Forest** Justin Koller, (907)747-4297 [jpkoller@fs.fed.us](mailto:jpkoller@fs.fed.us)

Author deployed in field. Report expected next week.

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

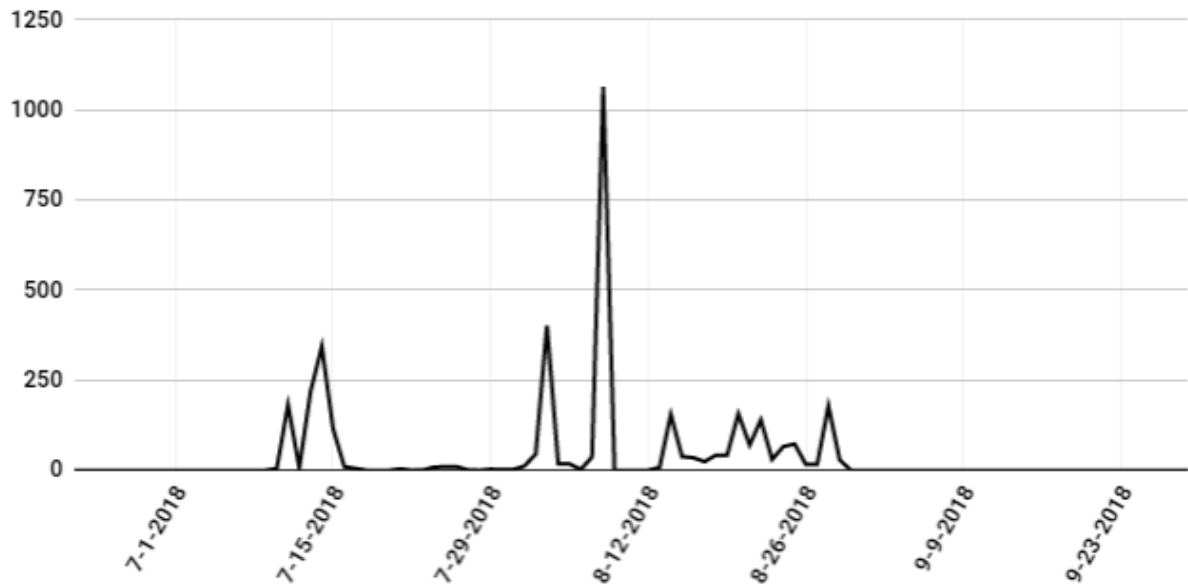
August 31, 2018

**Yakutat area:** The Coho Salmon season is underway in the Yakutat area, and most of the area is open to commercial fishing, but effort is light. Most of the fishing is concentrated in the Situk-Ahrnklin Inlet and in Yakutat Bay.

**Northern Inside waters:** The commercial purse seine season is essentially over with the closing of Pink Salmon-directed fisheries. Limited fall Chum Salmon openings may occur depending on observations of run strength. This year's total Pink Salmon harvest for the southeast Alaska region is around 7 million fish, well under the forecast of 23 million fish.

**Neva Lake Sockeye Salmon:** Sockeye Salmon are continuing to trickle through the Neva Lake video weir (**Figure 1**), and Coho Salmon are starting to show up. As of August 29, about 3,600 Sockeye and 220 Coho had passed through the weir. While we appear to have finally defeated the beavers that plagued us earlier in the season, there have been a few bears investigating the weir (**Figure 2**). So far, no damage has been done, but we are monitoring them closely.

### Escapement of Sockeye Salmon through the Neva Lake Weir, 2018



**Figure 1.** Daily escapement of Sockeye Salmon through the Neva Lake video weir.



**Figure 2.** Surveillance video capture of a bear looking into the video chute at the Neva Lake video weir, while leaning on the beaver-deterrent fence around the chute exit.

**Sitkoh Lake Sockeye Salmon:** The Sockeye Salmon escapement into Sitkoh Lake has improved somewhat, but remains dismal. As of August 27<sup>th</sup>, 335 Sockeye Salmon had been counted passing through the video weirs at the outlet of the lake. For comparison, about 4,000 had been counted at the same time last year, and almost 12,000 in 2016. Project personnel from the Forest Service and the Angoon Community Association visited the site on August 27-28 to do routine maintenance. A large beaver dam was located downstream of the weir, which appeared to be impeding fish passage, based on the large number of bear-chewed carcasses scattered across the dam. The crew punched several holes in the dam to restore fish passage (**Figure 3**) but it is likely the beavers will rebuild in short order. The bears have also been visiting the Sitkoh Lake weir (**Figure 4**) but haven't caused any issues so far.



**Figure 3.** Angoon Community Association crewmember Roger Williams Sr. dismantles a beaver dam on Sitkoh Lake Creek.



**Figure 4.** Surveillance video capture of a brown bear looking at the Sitkoh Lake net weirs.

**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)**

Author out of office for week. Report expected 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](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](mailto:dave_sarafin@nps.gov)**

Reporting concluded for season. Contact author with questions and comments at above contact information.

#### Links:

ADFG 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>

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.**  
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### **4 September 2018**

This will be the last report submitted for this season. Please contact author at above contact information if you have questions.

A total of 91 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](mailto:Jeffrey_Anderson@fws.gov)

Reporting concluded for season. Contact author with questions and comments at above contact information.

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](mailto:michael_brady@fws.gov) or Kevin Van Hatten (907) 487-0230  
[Kevin\\_VanHatten@fws.gov](mailto:Kevin_VanHatten@fws.gov)

Reporting concluded for season. Contact author with questions and comments at above contact information.

*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](mailto:Jonathon_Gerken@fws.gov)

Report not submitted for week.

*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 management staff at 907-455-1849 or 907-456-0406.

The 2018 Fall Chum Salmon inseason run is on track for a total run size of over 1.2 million fish, above the median and expectations. This level of abundance is typically sufficient to meet escapement and subsistence needs, and provide a surplus for commercial and personal use purposes. The Fall Chum Salmon run is nearly over in the lower Yukon, however fishermen are still looking forward to harvesting Fall Chum Salmon in the upper Yukon. The Coho Salmon run appears to be tracking near the expected average total run size at this time.

**Fall Assessment Information**

Fall Chum Salmon assessment began on July 16 in the Lower Yukon Test Fishery (LYTF) and has a cumulative CPUE through September 4 of 2,886, above the median of 1,495. The Mt. Village Test Fishery (MVTF) has a cumulative CPUE through September 3 of 2,972, above the median of 1,118. The Pilot Station sonar transitioned to fall season assessment on July 19 and has a cumulative passage of 881,094 through September 3, above the median of 702,932. The run appears to be late this year based on the passage past the Pilot Station sonar. The Fall Chum Salmon genetics sampling program at the Pilot Station is showing stock proportions within expectations. The Fall Chum Salmon run is nearing the end in the lower Yukon. The Pilot Station will cease operations for the season on September 7. The Chandalar River sonar began operations on August 12 and has an estimated passage of 12,889 Fall Chum Salmon through September 3, well below the average of 62,923. The Eagle sonar transitioned over the fall season on August 21 and has a cumulative passage estimate of 1,401 Fall Chum Salmon, well below the average of 8,169.

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 September 4 of 364, below the median of 419. The Mt. Village Test Fishery (MVTF) has a cumulative Coho Salmon CPUE through September 4 of 616, below the median of 1,022. The Pilot Station sonar has a cumulative Coho Salmon passage of 126,612 through September 3, below the median of 144,651. The Coho Salmon passage is past the  $\frac{3}{4}$  point at the Pilot Station sonar.

### **Fall Season Management Actions**

The entire Alaska portion of the Yukon River has now transitioned to fall season management. The Coastal District and Districts 1 through 3 are open to subsistence salmon fishing 24 hours a day, seven days a week except Districts 1 and 2 are typically closed for 12 hours before, during, and 12 hours after each commercial fishing period. District 4 and Subdistricts 5A, 5B, and 5C have subsistence fishing opportunity increased from 5 to 7 days per week as an effort to compensate fishermen for foregone harvest when conserving Chinook Salmon earlier in the season. Subsistence fishing in Subdistrict 5D is open on its full standard schedule of 24 hours a day, seven days a week and Subdistricts 6A and 6B are on their standard schedules of two 42-hour periods per week. At this time all areas allow 7.5” or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels during salmon fishing periods. Subsistence fishing in the Alaska portion of the Porcupine River may be restricted to 3 days per week to provide protection for Fishing Branch stocks that have

Seventeen fall season commercial periods have occurred in District 1 and nineteen in District 2 so far this season with a preliminary combined harvest of 353,593 Fall Chum Salmon and 96,855 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. 900 Fall Chum Salmon have been harvested through August 20. This is a small scale commercial fishery with an expected harvest of around 2,000 Fall Chum Salmon. Commercial fishing began in District 6 on August 17. Preliminary harvest estimates are 150 Fall Chum Salmon and one Coho 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 thirteenth and final YRDFA weekly teleconference was held on August 28 with very few subsistence fishermen reporting this week. Yukon River fishermen on the Alaskan side of the border 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. Some fishermen were satisfied with their Chinook Salmon harvest and others were short of filling their subsistence needs. 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)**



Reporting concluded for season. Contact author with questions and comments at above contact information.

### **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)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Northwest Alaska – Ken Adkisson, National Park Service, Nome.**

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Reporting concluded for season. Contact author with questions and comments at above contact information.

***Federal Subsistence Fisheries Regulations for the Kotzebue Area***

<http://alaska.fws.gov/asm/pdf/fishregs11/norton.pdf>