

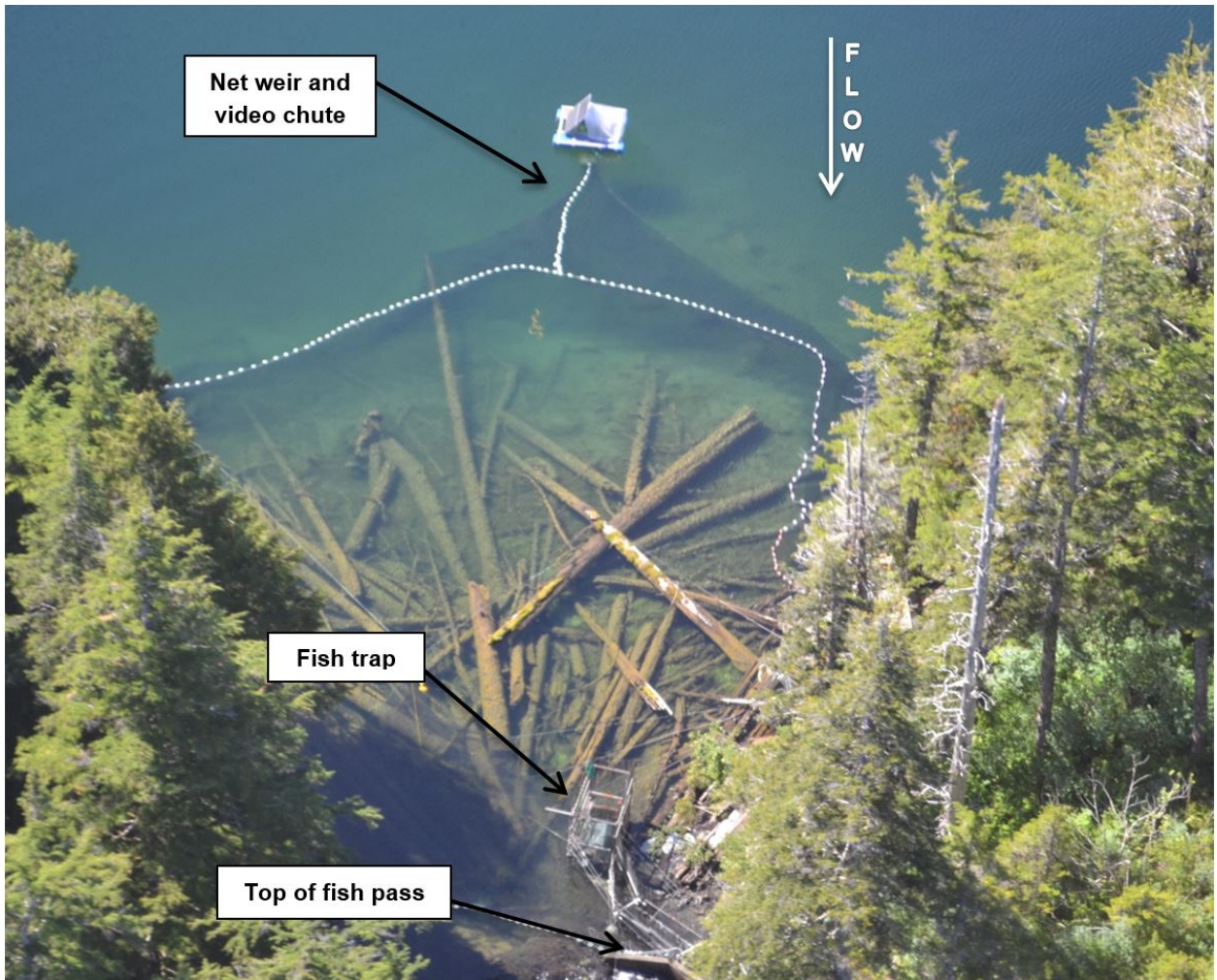
**FISHERIES UPDATE FOR THE WEEK OF JUNE 10-JUNE 16, 2018.** Report #3  
Compiled by George Pappas - (907) 786-3822, [George.Pappas@fws.gov](mailto:George.Pappas@fws.gov) Office of  
Subsistence Management, USFWS.

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.

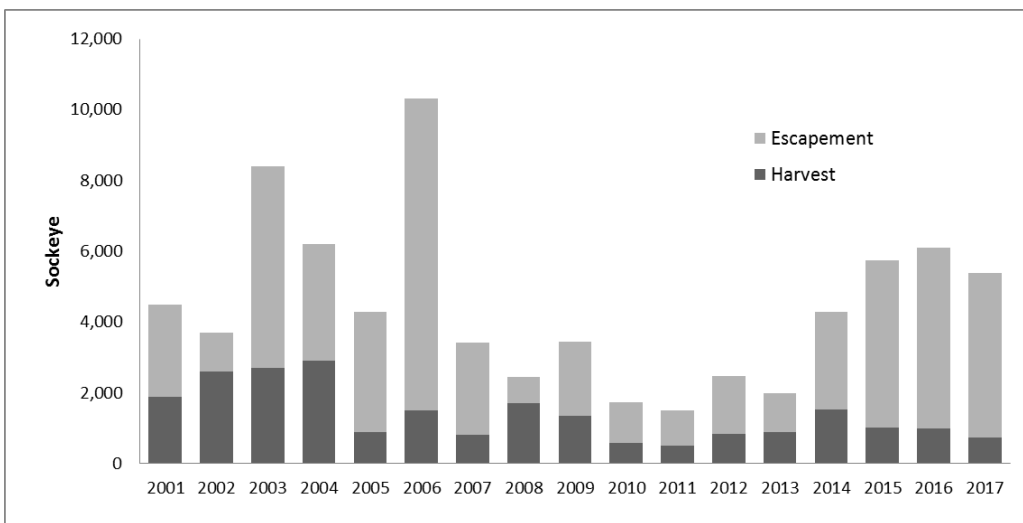
### **SOUTHEAST ALASKA**

**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)

**Falls Lake Sockeye Salmon** - The Forest Service and the Organized Village of Kake operate the Falls Lake trap and video net weir which will be operational the first week of July. 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.

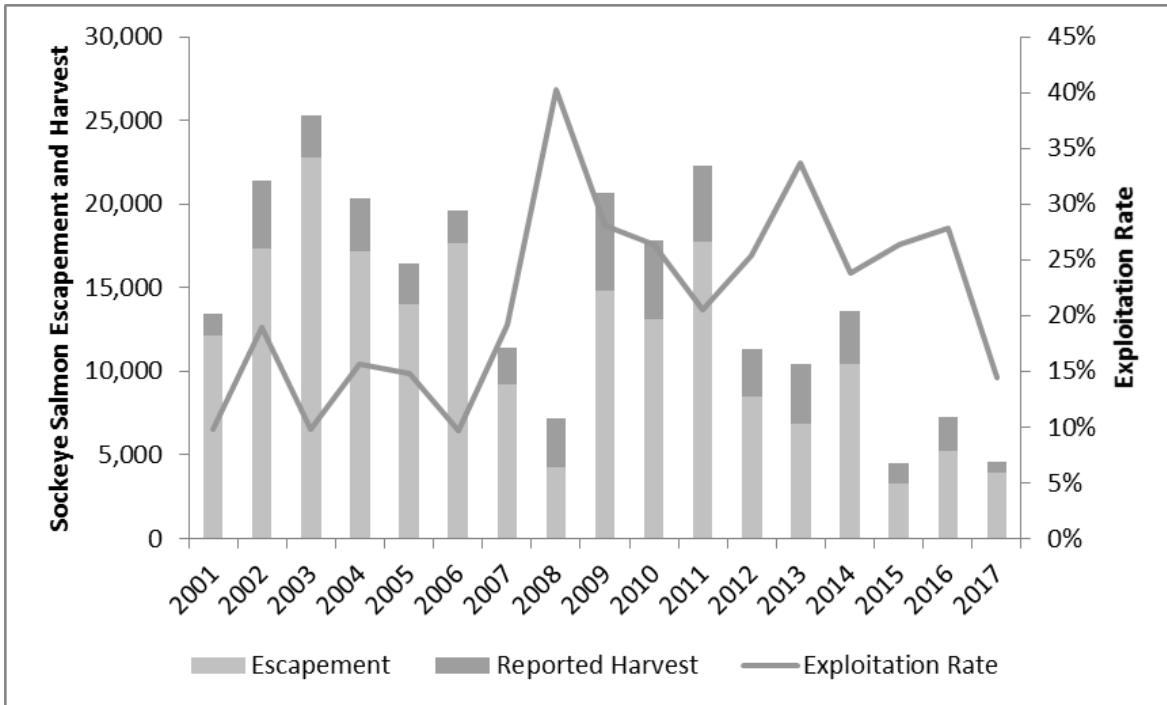


**Figure 1.** Aerial photo of the Falls Lake outlet illustrating the typical location of weir equipment.



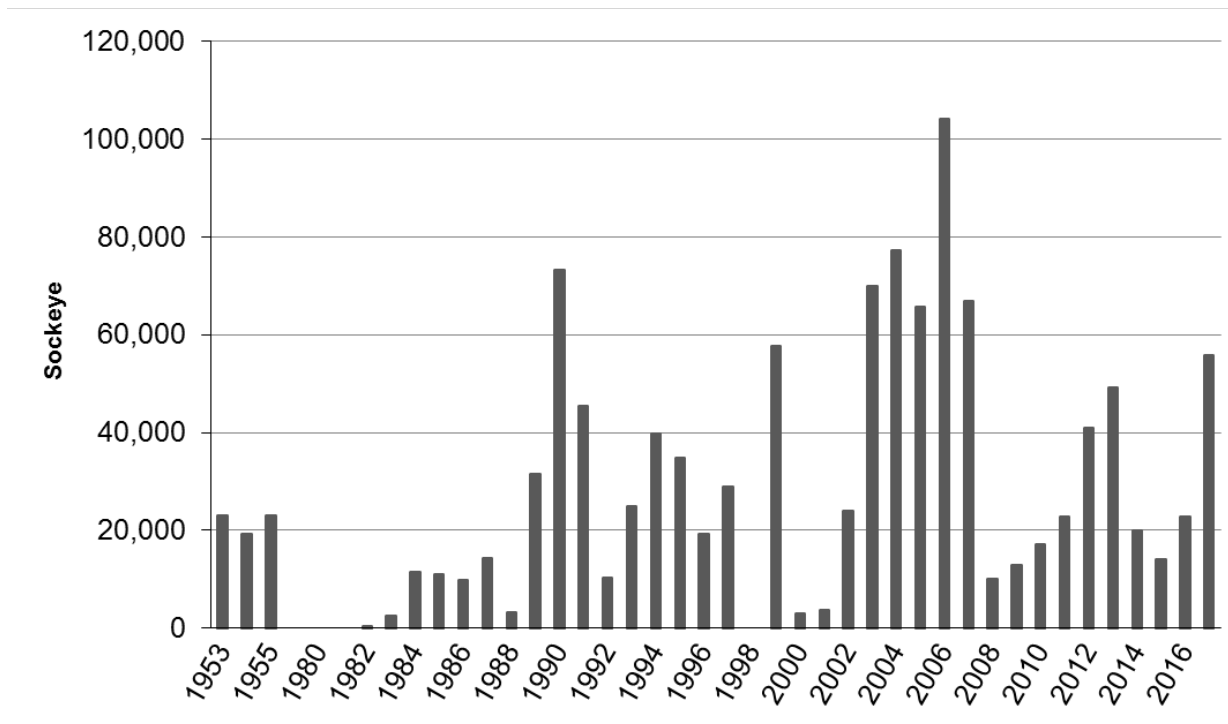
**Figure 2.** Escapement plus harvest equals total terminal run of Sockeye Salmon at Falls Lake, 2001-2017.

**Klag Bay Sockeye Salmon** - The Sitka Tribe of Alaska operates the Sockeye Salmon monitoring weir at Klag Bay which is scheduled to be operational the last week in June. In 2017, approximately 3,898 sockeye migrated past the weir while an estimated 1,087 sockeye 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, 2001-2017.

**Redoubt Lake Sockeye Salmon** - The Forest Service operates the Redoubt Lake weir which was operating as of June 16. In 2017, an estimated 55,397 Sockeye Salmon passed through the weir into Redoubt Lake. On July 11, 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. These limits were based on an in-season model prediction of about 55,000 sockeye returning.



**Figure 4.** 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 King Salmon season in Sitka was off to a slow start for both the commercial and sport fisheries. Fishers from both groups report below average catch rates. Management measures have decreased the bag limits for resident and non-resident sport anglers and curtailed commercial fishery opportunity.

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

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

The 2018 Prince of Wales/Kosciusko spring subsistence steelhead fishery ended on May 31<sup>st</sup>. A total of 42 permits were issued to Prince of Wales Island residents during this fishery. Permits from this fishery being are being returned and are due back by June 15. The total reported harvest to date is 14 Steelhead Trout.

Currently 125 Federal salmon/trout/char permits have been issued in the Southeast Alaska/Yakutat region. Of these, 88 have been issued to Federally-qualified subsistence users residing on Prince of Wales Island.

Although Chinook Salmon abundance has been determined to be very low this year, hatchery return Chinook Salmon are present in the local Craig and Klawock area resulting in many subsistence users actively fishing under sport fishing regulations at this time. Although a couple of Prince of Wales Island streams have June returns of sockeye, most subsistence users are in preparation for subsistence harvest in July.

Sockeye Salmon should be beginning to show at both the Thorne River and Hatchery Creek. Limited subsistence activity has started to occur at these sites. The larger, more historic fisheries will not begin until July. These fisheries include: Hetta Lake, Klawock Lake, Sarkar, Karta River, Salmon Bay Lake and Red Lake. There are no forecasts for returns to these locations.

The Hetta Lake weir has been operational since June 7, with 17 Sockeye Salmon counted. The Eek Lake weir just became operational on June 12. Both projects are run by the Hydaburg Cooperative Association.

There are currently some commercial Chinook troll fisheries occurring in terminal harvest areas within the Ketchikan and Craig areas. Harvest to date is 1135 Chinook. The Kendrick Bay terminal seine fishery for Chum Salmon in District 2 and the drift gillnet fisheries in Districts 1 and 6 are scheduled to open June 17.

**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.

State managed commercial fisheries in the area are being managed as follows to offer additional protection measures for Chinook Salmon:

### Drift Gillnet

District 6: The start of the District 6 drift gillnet fishery will be delayed by one week until Stat Week (SW) 25 (June 17). Time will be restricted to two fishing days in SW 25. A maximum mesh restriction of six inches will be in place through SW 27.

District 8: The start of the District 8 drift gillnet fishery will be delayed by two weeks until SW 26 (June 24). Time and/or area restrictions will occur through SW 28 (July 14). A maximum mesh restriction of six inches will be in place through SW 28.

### Purse Seine

Other than within Terminal Harvest Areas that have returns of hatchery produced Chinook Salmon, the purse seine fishery will be prohibited from retaining Chinook Salmon over 28" in length for the 2018 season.

Low Chinook Salmon abundance has resulted in the following restrictions to sport fishermen in the Petersburg and Wrangell areas:

- The marine waters of District 8 and a portion of District 7 between Babler Point and Madan Bay: closed to the retention of king salmon from May 1 through July 15.
- A small area inside of District 8, immediately adjacent to City Creek: open to king salmon fishing from June 1 through July 31 to target Alaska hatchery king salmon returning to this location.
- Wrangell Narrows/Blind Slough terminal harvest area: sport fishing opportunity may be increased from June 1 through July 31 to target surplus returning Alaska hatchery king salmon.

The Federal Stikine River directed Chinook Salmon subsistence fishery was closed pre-season by the in-season manager. The closure will run through June 20<sup>th</sup>. The directed Sockeye Salmon fishery under this permit will begin on June 21<sup>st</sup>. As of today, 28 fishing permits have been issued for the Stikine River Federal subsistence salmon fishery.

Currently 113 Federal salmon/trout/char permits have been issued in the Southeast Alaska/Yakutat region. Of these, 17 have been issued to Federally-qualified subsistence users residing on Prince of Wales Island.

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

No report submitted this week.

### **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.RI>

*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=RI.home>

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

### **SOUTHCENTRAL ALASKA**

#### **Prince William Sound – Copper River**

**Copper River – Dave Sarafin, (907) 822-7281- [Dave Sarafin@NPS.gov](mailto:Dave.Sarafin@NPS.gov), Wrangell-St. Elias National Park/Preserve**

No report submitted for this week.

#### Links

ADF&G Miles Lake daily sonar estimates

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

NVE's Chinook Escapement Monitoring project in the Copper River

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

ADF&G Copper River Inseason Commercial Harvest Estimates

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

Gulkana River counting tower – ADF&G

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

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

No report submitted, expect first report at end of June.

**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)

The 2018 subsistence dip net fisheries for salmon began on the Kenai and Kasilof rivers June 15 and June 16, respectively. Seasons for subsistence fishing with rod and reel are the same as for the taking of fish under Alaska sport fishing regulations. Most of the initial rod and reel subsistence effort will be focused on Sockeye Salmon in the Upper Kenai and Russian Rivers which opened on June 11.

Permits were issued for community gillnet fisheries on the Kenai and Kasilof rivers. Regulatory dates for the Kasilof River experimental community gillnet fishery are from June 16 through August 15. Regulatory periods for the Kenai River community gillnet fishery are from July 1 through August 15 and from September 10 – 30. USFWS staff issued permits in Ninilchik on June 13.

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game has issued Emergency Orders to protect Chinook Salmon returning to the Kenai and Kasilof rivers. The Kenai River sport fishery for Chinook Salmon is limited to catch-and-release for the remainder of June in all waters below Skilak Lake and will be restricted to catch-and-release fishing for Chinook Salmon upstream from the regulatory marker below Slikok Creek from July 1-15. The Kasilof River sport fishery was also restricted to one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure and prohibiting retention of naturally-produced Chinook Salmon through June 30. More information can be found at <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=fishing.main>

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) 487-2600/0230 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)

Sockeye Salmon returns have continued to be slow this year within the Kodiak Management Area and are within the 10 year average but below the 5 year average. There has been a steady flow of Chinook Salmon passing through the Karluk and Ayakulik River weirs but these runs continue to be weak.

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game and FWS – Kodiak NWR have issued Emergency Orders and Emergency Special Actions, respectively, to closure of subsistence harvest for the following areas:



- ADF&G: E.O. #4-FS-K-SUB-01-18, which closes Buskin River and Afognak Bay to subsistence fishermen.
- USFWS – Kodiak NWR: E.S.A. 9-RS-01-18, closes Buskin River to subsistence fishermen and,
- USFWS – Kodiak NWR: E.S.A. 9-RS-02-18, closes Afognak Bay to subsistence fishermen.
- ADF&G: E.O. #4-FS-K-SUB-01-18, closes Saltery Cove, Ouzinkie village, and Anton Larsen Bay.

***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

*Update:* Escapement and assessment projects are being installed. Subsistence fisheries are open. Commercial fishing periods have been announced in Bristol Bay Management Area and the South Alaska Peninsula Management Area. Fisherman should consult with Alaska Department of Fish and Game emergency orders and fishing regulations prior to fishing. The Chignik Management Area weir has counted a total of 1,995 Sockeye Salmon as of June 10.

These areas support abundant returns of salmon, particularly Sockeye Salmon; as well as some of the largest commercial fisheries for salmon in Alaska. All of the assessments of salmon returns are conducted by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, and provide the basis for any inseason assessment and management. None of the adjustments in commercial fishing management throughout any of these areas are anticipated to affect subsistence fishing in Federally-managed waters.

**Bristol Bay:**

The 2018 Bristol Bay Sockeye Salmon run is forecast to be approximately 41 to 61million fish for nine river systems: Kvichak, Alagnak, Naknek, Egegik, Ugashik, Wood, Igushik, Nushagak, and Togiak. Based on the forecast 31.2 to 51.7 million fish are available for commercial inshore harvest. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game has strategies in place for all mixed stock districts to address differential run strength should that occur. Gillnets are the primary gear used for most subsistence fishing for salmon. A permit is required for subsistence harvest of salmon.

The commercial salmon season in Bristol Bay opens June 1 by regulation and commercial fishing openings have been announced. Fishing in eastside districts and Togiak will be allowed using a weekly schedule that will vary by district. The schedules

are in place to balance fishing opportunity with escapement in the early part of the season, particularly for Chinook Salmon. As each run develops and Sockeye Salmon run characteristics become defined within individual districts, fishing time will be adjusted accordingly. In the Nushagak District, management of the Chinook Salmon fishery will govern fishing time in the early part of the season, followed by directed Sockeye Salmon management as abundance dictates.

The sustainable escapement goals (SEG) for Bristol Bay systems are:

**Escapement Goals:**

Kvichak	SEG = 2,000,000 – 10,000,000
Alagnak	SEG = 320,000 minimum
Naknek	SEG = 800,000 – 2,000,000
Egegik	SEG = 800,000 – 2,000,000
Ugashik	SEG = 500,000 – 1,400,000
Wood River	SEG = 700,000 – 1,800,000
Igushik	SEG = 150,000 – 400,000
Nushagak	SEG = 370,000 – 900,000
Togiak	SEG = 120,000 – 270,000

Chignik:

The 2018 Sockeye Salmon forecasted run size for the Chignik River Management Area (CMA) is 1,749,000 fish with a harvest estimate of 1,011,000 Sockeye Salmon. The CMA is composed of five fishing districts: Eastern, Central, Chignik Bay, Western, and Perryville. In June, the first commercial fishing period in the Chignik Bay, Central, and Eastern districts and the Inner Castle Cape Subsection of the Western District may occur after approximately 20,000 Sockeye Salmon have escaped or are expected to escape into the Chignik River. The Chignik River Chinook Salmon harvest is dependent upon the amount of commercial fishing time for Sockeye Salmon in July. The commercial harvest 10 year average is 7,000 fish. Through June 17, 2108 only

**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:

There are numerous salmon stocks and fisheries throughout the Alaska Peninsula, as well as the Aleutian Islands. The largest fisheries are managed under management plans. Management objectives vary by district and time. Several Sockeye Salmon escapements (mostly on the north peninsula) are monitored with weirs including Nelson, Bear, Sandy,

Ilnik, McLees, and Orzinski systems. Preseason forecasts are made only for the Nelson River and late-run Bear Lake stocks. The 2018 Sockeye Salmon run size projections are 428,000 for the Nelson River and 308,000 for late-run Bear Lake. A permit is required for subsistence harvest of salmon.

Escapement Goals:

Nelson River	BEG = 97,000 – 219,000
Late-run Bear Lake	BEG = 117,000 – 195,000

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](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)

Emmonak Summer Office (907) 949-1798

The Emmonak Field Office is open for summer management activities. The office can be contacted by calling (907) 949-1798.

### **Summer Season Outlook**

The Summer Chum Salmon outlook is for an above average run size large enough to provide for escapement and subsistence uses. A surplus of up to 1.4 million Summer Chum Salmon is anticipated to be available for commercial harvest. However, commercial harvest opportunity will depend upon available markets and the strength of the overlapping Chinook Salmon run. The Chinook Salmon outlook is for a below average run size of 173,000 to 251,000 fish. The Chinook Salmon run abundance came in near the upper end of the outlook ranges the last four seasons, possibly indicating an improvement in productivity. The 2018 salmon runs may be large enough to provide for normal subsistence harvests. However, a cautionary approach is being taken early in the season, and inseason management strategies are just beginning to transition to being based on run assessment information now that fish are entering the river. If assessment indicates the Chinook salmon run size is near the upper end of the outlook range, and goals are projected to be met, subsistence fishing restrictions would likely be relaxed. If that occurs, commercial Chum Salmon fishermen may be given the opportunity to sell Chinook Salmon incidentally-caught in the Chum Salmon fishery. This would likely be near the tail end of the run, when the majority of Chinook Salmon have passed upriver for escapement and subsistence harvest purposes. If inseason assessment indicates a poorer than anticipated run, subsistence fishing time may be reduced or gear may be limited to selective gear types with no retention of Chinook salmon allowed.

### **Assessment Information**

Subsistence fishermen in the lower Yukon River area have been fishing since ice out. High debris loads immediately following ice continue to hinder both subsistence fishing and lower Yukon test fishing efforts. Debris loads have decreased significantly since ice out but continues to foul nets in the traditional set net test fishing sites within a matter of hours. The Lower Yukon Test Fish (LYTF) project has a cumulative Chinook Salmon set net CPUE of 1.51 through June 15, well below the average of 7.08; however, the set net test fishery has not been fishing efficiently due to large amounts of debris building up in the net. Gillnets that are drifted do not typically foul nearly as set nets because they float along in the river current at the same speed as the debris. The Chinook Salmon drift gillnet test fishery has a cumulative CPUE of 110.37 through June 15, just below the average of 123.58. The Summer Chum Salmon drift gillnet project has a cumulative CPUE of 3,912.89 through June 15, well above the average of 604.05. The Pilot Station sonar began full operations on June 1; however, test fishing catches were also hampered by high debris loads the first week of operations. The cumulative Chinook Salmon passage estimates past the Pilot Station sonar through June 15 are 22,534 salmon; below the average of 36,804 salmon. The cumulative Summer Chum Salmon passage estimates past the Pilot Station sonar through June 15 are 144,315, well above the median of 16,868 salmon. It is still early in the season, but at this time, the Chinook Salmon run is entering near the low end of preseason projections and appears to be tracking similar to 2015. Summer Chum Salmon are entering in good numbers at this time. The test fishery has not yet detected what managers would consider the first pulse of Chinook Salmon which typically arrives just before the first quarter. The average first quarter point at the Pilot Station sonar for Chinook Salmon is June 19, and June 22 for Summer Chum Salmon.

### **Management Actions**

Management decisions have been consistent with the preseason outlook. The northern portion of the Coastal District and District 1 is being managed as one district for 2018. To provide some protection for early arriving Chinook Salmon, subsistence salmon fishing in Districts 1-3 were placed on half their regulatory schedule with two, 18-hour periods per week using 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnet gear. Subdistrict 4-A was placed on half its regulatory schedule with two, 24-hour periods per week using 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnet gear on June 14. Subdistricts 4-B and 4-C will be placed on half its regulatory schedule with two, 24-hour periods per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnet gear on June 18. Current assessment is indicating that the Chinook Salmon run is projecting a total run size near the lower end of the pre-season outlook range. Therefore, a subsistence salmon fishing period is being cancelled in Districts 1-3 and Subdistrict 4-A to protect the first pulse of Chinook Salmon. During subsistence salmon fishing closures, fishing for non-salmon species is allowed. However, only gillnets with a 4-inch or smaller mesh size may be used. Chinook Salmon caught incidentally may be retained for subsistence purposes.

Subsistence fishing in the Innoko and Koyukuk rivers, District 5, Subdistricts 6-A and 6-B, Old Minto and Upper Tanana Areas will remain open 24 hours per day, 7 days per week and restricted to 7.5-inch or less mesh gillnet and fish wheel gear until Chinook Salmon reach each one of these areas. The personal use fishery in Subdistrict 6-C is open on its regulatory schedule of two, 42-hour periods per week restricted to 7.5-inch or less mesh gillnet gear and fish wheels. Upriver districts should expect similar restrictions should the Chinook Salmon run continue to enter near the lower end of the pre-season projection.

During subsistence salmon fishing closures, gillnets that have mesh size 4-inches or smaller not exceeding 60 feet in length may be used to target non-Salmon species. The sequential activation of subsistence fishing restrictions will continue in all districts as the Chinook Salmon migrate upstream.

Directed Summer Chum Salmon commercial fishing began in District 1 on June 9 and District 2 on June 12. All periods are directed towards Summer Chum Salmon using dip nets and beach seines with incidentally caught Chinook Salmon being immediately released alive.

### **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. Run outlook and possible management strategies were discussed at Federal RAC meetings and State AC meetings, the Yukon River Panel meeting, at the annual Yukon River Drainage Fishermen's Association Board meeting, and at the Yukon River InterTribal Fish Commission annual meeting. On May 2, a pre-season planning meeting was held in Anchorage that brought together representatives from most Alaskan Yukon River communities to discuss the run outlook and management options.

The second YRDFA weekly teleconference occurred on June 11. Most reports were of subsistence fishermen just getting started in the lower Yukon. Most people in the mid-river are just getting ready, but a Chinook Salmon was reported being caught as far up as Galena.

## **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)**

### **Summary:**

The Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge (YDNWR) in season manager, with the authority delegated by the Federal Subsistence Board and in consultation with the Kuskokwim River Intertribal Fish Commission, announced a subsistence fishing opportunity for Chinook salmon within YDNWR waters for federally qualified users. This opportunity was 12 hours in duration, starting at 10:00AM June 12 and ending 10:00PM June 12, 2018. An estimated 6,690 (5,570-7,980) salmon were harvested. Chinook salmon harvest was estimated at 4,720 (3,940-5,530). Chum salmon harvest was estimated at 1,720 (1,230-2,380) and Sockeye harvest was estimated at 260 (150-390). A total of 466 drift boats were estimated to have occurred during this opportunity.

There was one more fishing opportunity on June 16, 2018. There is no preliminary harvest data available at this time.

### **Test Fisheries:**

As of June 17, the cumulative catch per unit of effort (CPUE) of Chinook salmon at the Alaska Department of Fish and Game's Bethel Test Fishery is 174. Cumulative CPUE on this date during 2017 and 2016 were 43 and 243, respectively.

Cumulative CPUE for chum salmon is at 216. Cumulative CPUE on this date during 2017 and 2016 were 148 and 50, respectively. Cumulative CPUE for Sockeye is at 16. Cumulative CPUE on this date during 2017 and 2016 were 71 and 8, 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)

**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/>

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**Norton Sound District**

Sport Fishing: All fresh waters from Bald Head to Point Romanof remain closed to sport fishing for king salmon by State E.O. The closure includes, but is not limited to, the Unalakleet, Shaktoolik, Koyuk, Ungalik, Inglutalik, and Golsovia River drainages. This emergency order will remain in effect through August 15, 2018 or until inseason assessments project that the escapement goal will be met for king salmon on the Unalakleet River.

***Other Norton Sound Coastal Waters***

All waters from Wood Point west to Point Romanof are open to subsistence salmon fishing seven days a week.

***Subdistrict 6 (Unalakleet)***

Subsistence Fishing: Effective the evening of June 8 at midnight, all marine waters and fresh waters of Norton Sound Subdistrict 6 were closed to subsistence salmon fishing. The North River and the Unalakleet River drainage downstream of the North River including the marine waters within 500 yards of the Unalakleet River mouth have been closed to subsistence gill net fishing since June 1, and will remain closed. Dip nets and cast nets may also be used, but any king salmon captured must be immediately released. The marine waters of the Unalakleet Subdistrict had a 24-hour fishing period from noon

Tuesday, June 12 to noon Wednesday, June 13. Set gill nets were restricted to a mesh size of 6 inches or smaller.

**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 Unalakleet River floating weir installation has been delayed because of high water. As soon as water levels permit the Weir will be installed.

**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 North River Tower will also begin operations as soon as water levels drop and water clarity improves.

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

Subsistence Fishing: The marine waters of the Shaktoolik Subdistrict had a 24-hour fishing period from noon Tuesday, June 12 to noon Wednesday, June 13. Set gill nets were restricted to a mesh size of 6 inches or smaller.

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

Subsistence Fishing: ADF&G will be implementing a subsistence salmon fishing schedule the second week of June. All flowing waters draining the Inglutalik and Ungalik Rivers, and all marine waters of Norton Bay Subdistrict, will be placed on a subsistence fishing schedule of two 36-hour periods per week. Periods will be from 6 AM Mondays to 6 PM Tuesdays, and from 6 AM Saturdays to 6 PM Sundays. During the openings from Mondays to Tuesdays, subsistence users will be restricted to set gill nets with a stretch mesh size of 6 inches or less. For weekend openings from Saturdays to Sundays, there will be no restrictions on mesh size.

Commercial Fishing: Commercial harvests of chum salmon are expected to be above average in 2018, and average for silver salmon. However restrictions on subsistence fishing time to protect king salmon will again be needed.

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

Subsistence Fishing: Except for 2014, when hook and line subsistence fishing for king salmon was closed, there have been no other subsistence restrictions and over 25 years in Subdistrict 3. Subsistence permits are required when subsistence salmon fishing in the Subdistrict. Other than the possibility of in-season king salmon restrictions, no other restrictions are expected



Commercial Fishing: Commercial fishing for chum salmon is expected to begin in mid to late June, and for silver beginning the end of July with gear restricted to a mesh size of 6 inches or less. If there is a commercial directed pink salmon fishery, gear will be restricted to a maximum mesh size of 4½ inches.

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

Subsistence Fishing: Permits are required for subsistence salmon fishing and no restrictions is subsistence fishing time are expected.

Commercial Fishing: The chum salmon run is expected to be above average this year, thus providing for a commercial chum fishery. Expected runs of pink and silver salmon would also provide commercial fishing opportunity.

### ***Subdistrict 1 (Nome)***

Subsistence Fishing: By regulation, the summer subsistence salmon gillnet fishing schedule went into effect in the Nome Subdistrict on June 15. The marine waters east of Cape Nome will continue to be open seven days a week. All Nome Subdistrict freshwater subsistence areas and the marine waters west of Cape Nome will be open to gillnet fishing for five days each week from 6 PM Wednesday until 6 PM Monday. Also effective June 15, beach seining for salmon will be open in all subsistence areas of the Nome Subdistrict whenever subsistence gillnet fishing is open. Unless closed by emergency order, beach seining will remain open during gillnet fishing periods through August 15. Dip nets and cast nets can also be used anytime gillnet fishing is open. Also, effective June 15, all gillnet and beach seine fishing upstream of Boulder Creek on the Sinuk River will be closed. This closure is in effect to protect migrating sockeye salmon that hold in the Sinuk River Bridge area before reaching the spawning grounds.

Subsistence salmon fishing permits are required, and stream specific harvest limits are listed on the permit. There are no catch limits in the marine waters.

Commercial Fishing: Commercial fishing periods are expected for chum salmon and possibly pink salmon (depending on buyer interest) and silver salmon (depending on run strength).

### **Port Clarence District**

Subsistence Fishing: 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. No subsistence fishing closures are expected, but the department will limit sockeye salmon subsistence to a harvest of 25 fish initially, and will re-increase or waive the limit if the run is similar to the last several years.

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 of

Pilgrim River expected to be reached.

### **Kotzebue District**

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

Commercial Fishing: the department intends to open the commercial fishery any time after July 9 when the buyers are ready, or the permit holders indicate they are ready to fish and a market is available.

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