

FISHERIES UPDATE FOR THE WEEK OF JUNE 17- 23, 2018. Report #4
Compiled by George Pappas - (907) 786-3822, George_Pappas@fws.gov Office of
Subsistence Management, USFWS.

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

SOUTHEAST ALASKA

Sitka and Hoonah Area – Justin Koller, Forest Service, Tongass National Forest
Justin Koller, (907)747-4297 jpkoller@fs.fed.us

Falls Lake Sockeye Salmon - The Forest Service and the Organized Village of Kake operate the Falls Lake trap and video net weir which 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.

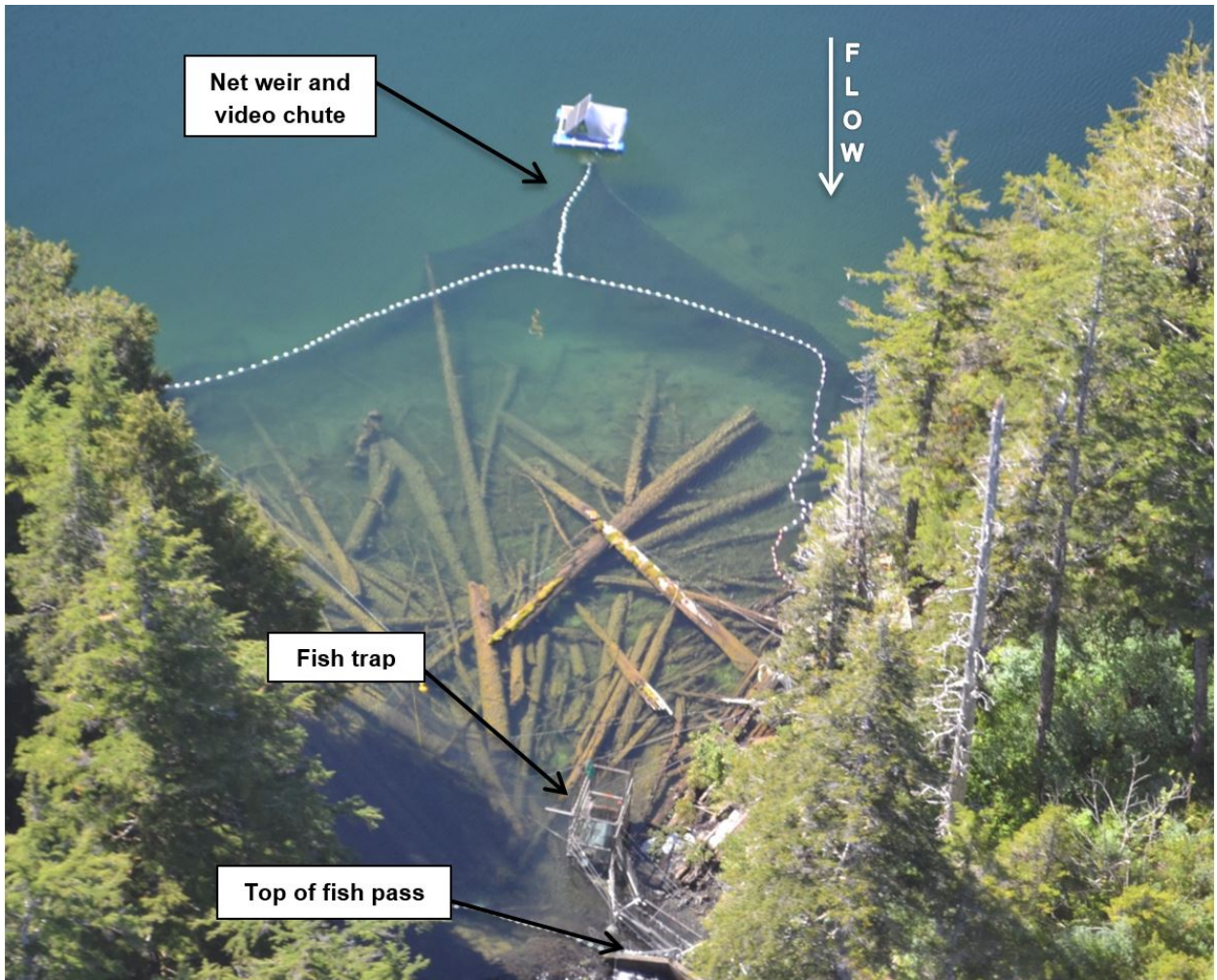


Figure 1. Aerial photo of the Falls Lake outlet illustrating the typical location of weir equipment.

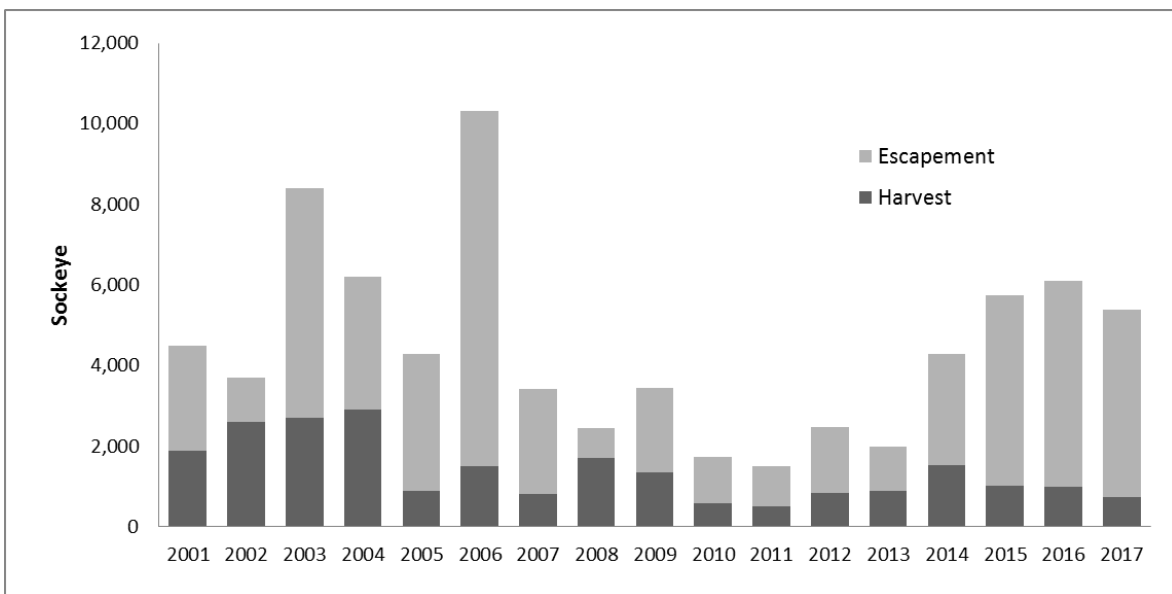


Figure 2. Escapement plus harvest equals total terminal run of Sockeye Salmon at Falls Lake, 2001-2017.

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.

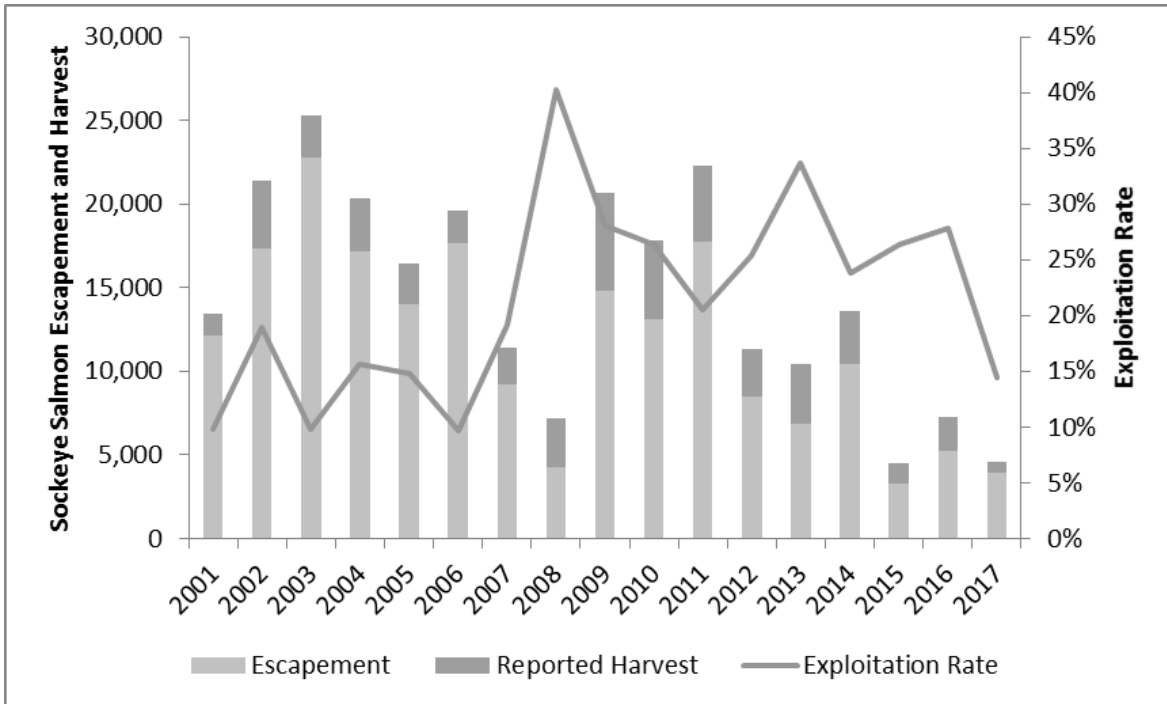


Figure 3. Reported harvest, escapement, and exploitation rate for Klag Lake Sockeye Salmon, 2001-2017.

Redoubt Lake Sockeye Salmon - The Forest Service operates the Redoubt Lake weir which was operating as of June 16. As of June 20, 48 Sockeye Salmon have entered the lake. In 2017, an estimated 67,556 Sockeye Salmon passed through the weir into Redoubt Lake. Almost half of the escapement consisted of jacks which is unusual. Jacks are male Sockeye Salmon that spend only one year in saltwater before returning to spawn. On July 11, 2017, in accordance with the Redoubt Lake Management Plan, the individual/household subsistence Sockeye Salmon 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 returning.

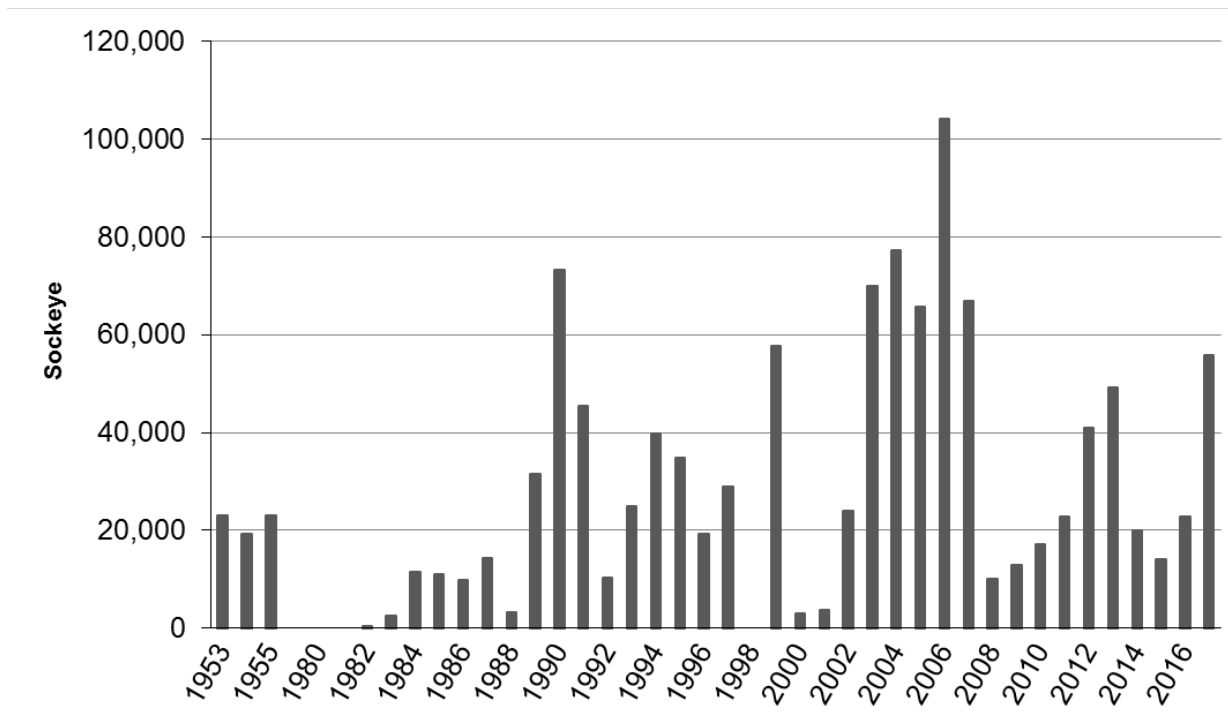


Figure 4. Annual Sockeye Salmon expanded escapement into Redoubt Lake for years with data: 1953 to 1955, 1982 to 1997, and 1999 to 2017. The weir was not operated in 1998.

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 Chinook Salmon season in Sitka continues to be slow in 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

The 2018 Prince of Wales/Kosciusko spring subsistence steelhead fishery ended on May 31st. A total of 42 permits were issued to Prince of Wales Island residents during this fishery. Permits from this fishery are being returned and were due back by June 15. The total reported harvest to date is 25 Steelhead Trout.

Currently 134 Federal salmon/trout/char permits have been issued in the Southeast Alaska/Yakutat region. Of these, 96 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 Salmon, 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 39 Sockeye Salmon counted at the site. The Eek Lake weir has been operational since June 12th with no fish reported to date. Both projects are run by the Hydaburg Cooperative Association.

There are currently some commercial Chinook Salmon troll fisheries occurring in terminal harvest areas within the Ketchikan and Craig areas. Other open commercial fisheries include The Kendrick Bay terminal seine fishery for Chum Salmon in District 2 and the drift gillnet fishery in District 1. Commercial troll will begin on July 1. Cumulative harvest to date for Districts 1-4 are 2,000 Chinook Salmon, 1,500 Sockeye Salmon, 190 Coho Salmon, 270 Pink Salmon and 15,000 Chum Salmon.

Petersburg/Wrangell area

This year's run of Chinook Salmon to the Stikine River is weak and was forecasted at 6,900 fish. This forecast is less than half of the bottom range of the 14,000 to 28,000 fish goal. Directed commercial, sport, and subsistence fisheries in the area have been closed to protect this return.

Currently, all purse seine and non-terminal harvest area troll fisheries are closed in the area. There is limited drift gillnet opportunity in District 6 as this is the only commercial fishing district open at the moment in the area. District 8 is still closed. Commercial

harvest during the first District 6 opening were: 300 Chinook Salmon, 500 Sockeye Salmon, 300 Coho Salmon, 100 Pink Salmon and 700 Chum Salmon

The Federal Stikine River directed Chinook Salmon subsistence fishery was closed pre-season by the in-season manager. The closure ran through June 20th. The directed Sockeye Salmon fishery under this permit began June 21st. As of today, 43 fishing permits have been issued for the Stikine River Federal subsistence salmon fishery.

Currently 134 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 in the Petersburg/Wrangell area.

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

June 25, 2018

Yakutat area: The Chinook Salmon return to the Situk River remains poor, with only 10 fish counted through the weir as of June 10. This compares to 1,187 at the same time last year, and 329 in 2016. The forecast is for a total return of 750 large Chinook Salmon. Weir counts of outmigrating adult Steelhead have improved somewhat, with 5,221 fish counted through June 14th. Area-wide restrictions on the commercial, sport, and subsistence fisheries are in place to protect Chinook Salmon, and fisheries are closed on the Situk River. Yakutat area Sockeye Salmon abundance appears low, and commercial setnet fisheries have opened with reduced fishing time of 1.5 days instead the typical 2.5 days.

Northern Southeast: The commercial purse seine and drift gillnet fisheries have begun, with the first openings beginning in mid-June. The purse seine fishery is off to a slow start, and harvests from openings at Pt. Augusta and Hidden Falls are confidential due to the small number of boats participating. The Taku area drift gillnet fishery had average effort, but Sockeye Salmon catch was likely the lowest seen for the time period. On the bright side, catches of mostly hatchery-origin Chum Salmon were at a record high. A similar pattern was seen in the Lynn Canal drift gillnet fishery, where Chum Salmon catches were above average but Sockeye Salmon were well below average.

Neva Lake Sockeye Salmon: Crews from the Forest Service and the Hoonah Indian Association installed the remotely monitored 24/7 swim-through video weir at the outlet of Neva Lake on June 21 and 22 (Figure 1). The pair of picket weirs lead fish through a video chute with four cameras set to record motion (fish) triggered footage on on-site SD memory cards and an off-site computer running the Blue Iris video record and review program. We installed an additional three above water cameras, two fixed and one pan-tilt-zoom, to allow 24/7 intra/internet monitoring of the weir site since weir personnel are living and counting fish off-site at Ocean Beauty Seafood's plant in Excursion Inlet.

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

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 – Dave Sarafin, (907) 822-7281- Dave.Sarafin@NPS.gov, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park/Preserve

The Sockeye Salmon return to the Copper River appears to be extremely low. The State of Alaska has issued Emergency Orders restricting or closing all state fisheries except for the subsistence fishery of the Copper River District near Cordova. The restrictions to date include: limited early season commercial fishing periods, Chitina personal use fishery closure, Sockeye Salmon sport fishing closure, and limiting the Glennallen Subdistrict subsistence fishery to 2 days per week. The Federal inseason manager is presently monitoring run strength indicators to evaluate the need for additional restrictions.

Late in the afternoon on Friday June 15, the delegated Federal manager received several Special Action Requests to immediately close the personal use fishery of the Chitina Subdistrict, which was scheduled to close on Sunday, June 17. Given the late timing of the request to close to all except Federally qualified users in the area where the State managed personal use fishery takes place, the requested action was not taken since the effective time of an action would not allow enough time to inform the personal use fishermen. Additionally, additional harvest would be low late in the fishing period.

Some of the requests included closing all non-Federal fisheries in the Copper River. This requested action was also not taken. Although indicators of the Sockeye Salmon run strength in the Copper River did present a level of concern, the in season manager

believed the in river return to date, relative to historic run strength/timing data, was likely to support both unrestricted Federal subsistence harvest along with harvest from the only remaining upriver state fishery at a reduced level. Meetings were held with state fisheries managers that resulted in a mutually agreed upon course of action in which the State decided to restrict its Glennallen Subdistrict subsistence fishery to 2-days per week.

On Wednesday, June 20th, the State announced that starting Monday, June 25th, the Glennallen Subdistrict state subsistence fishery will be restricted to one 48-hour fishing period each week, from noon Friday to noon Sunday. The Federal subsistence fishery will remain open seven days per week. Based on current trends in estimated salmon passage at Miles Lake and measurements of Copper River streamflow, the Federal inseason manager concluded this is an appropriate management action at this point in time. The proponents agreed with this direction and the Federal inseason manager will not be taking immediate action on the requests to close the Copper River to all fishing except by Federally qualified subsistence users. The decision by ADF&G to restrict the number of days per week the state subsistence fishery is open does three things: 1. gives priority to Federal subsistence user in opportunity, specifically days available to fish; 2. gives priority to the Federal subsistence fishery in projected number of fish harvested; and 3. balances risk to improve the likelihood of achieving the minimum escapement goal of 360,000 sockeye salmon.

Meetings were also held with many of those requesting the actions in the fisheries. The evaluation of the Sockeye Salmon return, anticipated additional harvest during the season, and response to the requests were discussed.

The commercial fishery in the Copper River District was limited during the early season in response to low numbers of Sockeye Salmon observed in run strength indices. Three 12-hour open commercial fishing periods occurred, the last of which, was on May 28. Total Sockeye Salmon harvest from the three commercial fishing periods was approximately 26,000 fish. ADF&G has reported the cumulative harvest to be the 2nd lowest harvest to date in the last 50 years.

As of June 19, 2018 the ADF&G sonar at Miles Lake (located just downstream of the Million Dollar Bridge in the Copper River) estimated that 243,384 salmon had migrated upstream for the season. This estimate is 72% of the projected escapement of 343,481 for this date. A daily estimate of 3,102 salmon were estimated to pass by the sonar counter on June 19; however, near record high water levels in the Copper River at the site are believed to be slowing fish migration. Low counts through a series of days are likely associated with the increased flows.

The Federal subsistence fishery in the Chitina Subdistrict opened on June 1 and is expected to remain open through September 30. The State closed the Chitina personal use fishery on June 18, likely for the season. Sixty (60) Federal Chitina Subdistrict permits have been issued on the FWS online data base. Additional permits for this subdistrict have been issued in Chitina and Kennecott, NPS ranger stations that do not have internet connectivity.

The Glennallen Subdistrict opened for Federal subsistence users on May 15 and is expected to remain open until September 30. The State closed all Sockeye Salmon sport fishing in the Upper Copper River Drainage on June 18. The state subsistence fishery in

the Glennallen Subdistrict opened on June 1. Beginning Monday June 25, state subsistence fisheries in the Glennallen Subdistrict are limited to 2 days per week. One hundred seventy (170) Federal Glennallen permits have been issued on the FWS online data base. Additional permits for this subdistrict have been issued in Chitina and Kennebec, NPS ranger stations that do not have internet connectivity.

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

Installation of the Tanada Creek fish weir was completed Thursday, June 21. High water level of the creek and associated current force that limit the crew's capability of working in the creek delayed earlier attempts of installation. The water level in the creek has been above average for early June and is likely related to a delayed spring melt off of an unusually high winter snow load for the drainage area.

As of June 18, 4,646 Chinook Salmon had been tagged at the two project fishwheels in Baird Canyon operated by the Native Village of Eyak. The upriver fishwheels at Canyon Creek have captured 1,530 Chinook Salmon, of which, 127 were recaptured fish that had been tagged at the downstream wheels.

ADF&G's counting tower in the Gulkana River has reported passage estimates for the periods of June 8 -11 and June 17-19, with a season total of 30 Chinook Salmon reported.

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

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

Links

ADF&G Miles Lake daily sonar estimates

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

NVE's Chinook Escapement Monitoring project in the Copper River

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

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>

Links

ADF&G Miles Lake daily sonar estimates

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

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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

No report submitted. **Cook Inlet Area – Jeff Anderson, Field Supervisor, Kenai Fish and Wildlife Field Office** (907) 260-0132 Jeffrey_Anderson@fws.gov

A total of 272 permits for Cook Inlet Federal subsistence fisheries have been issued to qualified households through June 21. This includes 59 Kenai River permits (FFCI01) and 8 Designated Fisher permits to Cooper Landing households; 21 Kenai River permits (FFCI01) and 2 Designated Fisher permit to Hope households; and 103 Kenai River permits (FFCI01), 74 Kasilof River permits (FFCI02), and 5 Designated Fisher permits to Niniilchik households.

The 2018 subsistence dip net fisheries for salmon opened on the Kenai and Kasilof rivers June 15 and June 16, respectively. Harvest reported to date in the dip net fishery at Russian River Falls is 661 Sockeye Salmon. The rod and reel fishery on the Kenai River also opened on June 11 with the same seasons and areas as for the taking of fish under Alaska sport fishing regulations.

The Kasilof River experimental community gillnet fishery began on June 16 and continues through August 15. Harvest reported through June 21 includes 230 Sockeye Salmon. Regulatory periods for the Kenai River community gillnet fishery are from July 1 through August 15 and from September 10 – 30.

Emergency Special Action 10-KS-01-18 was issued to close the Federal subsistence rod and reel fishery for early-run Chinook Salmon in the Kenai River downstream from the outlet of Skilak Lake. The early-run will likely not achieve the lower bound of the optimal escapement goal and the restriction was necessary to conserve early-run Kenai River Chinook Salmon.

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

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

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

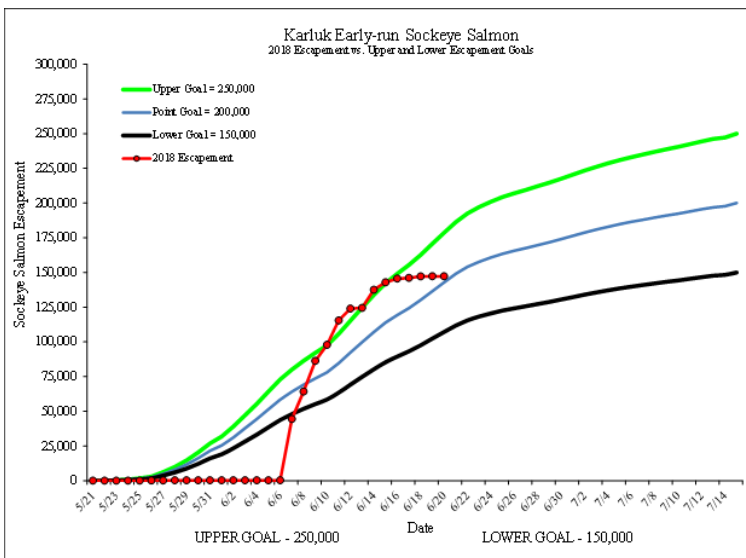
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/EONR/index.cfm?ADFG=area.list&Year=2017&AreaID=5>

Kodiak Island Area – Michael Brady, Refuge Manager, - Kodiak NWR

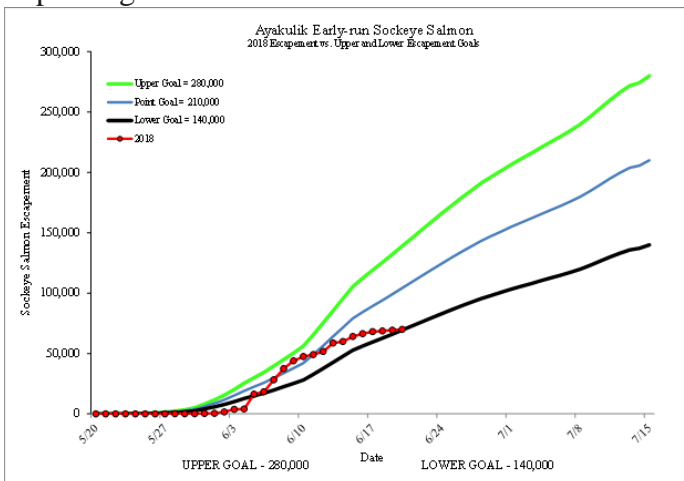
(907) 487-2600/0230 or michael_brady@fws.gov or Kevin Van Hatten (907) 487-0230 Kevin_VanHatten@fws.gov

The weekly summary has been modified to provide reader more detailed information and graphic representation of Kodiak Island Area salmon returns.

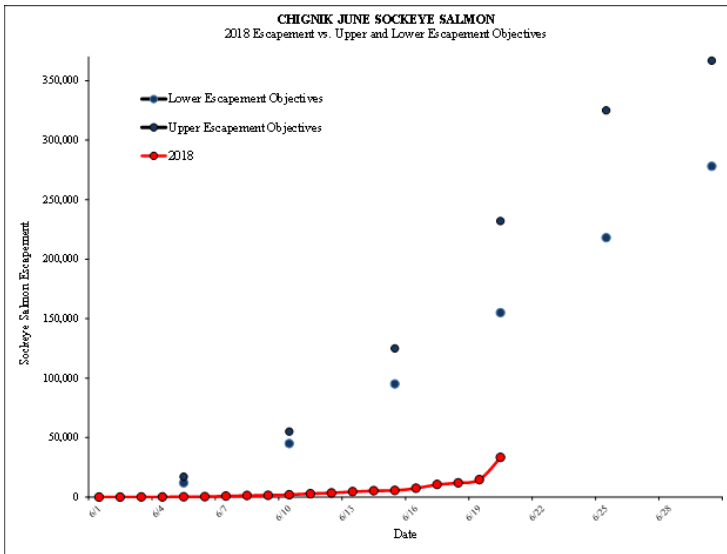
Karluk Update: Fish passage at Karluk has slowed and the crew is not reporting many fish in the lagoon. On average, at this date, we have passed 73% of Karluk’s early-run escapement. The crew is going to get a more detailed survey of the lagoon today. Harvest from the first two openings on the Westside was the worst in over 30 years. The Westside will remain shut down until we can see more fish entering the lagoon or several thousand fish pass the weir.



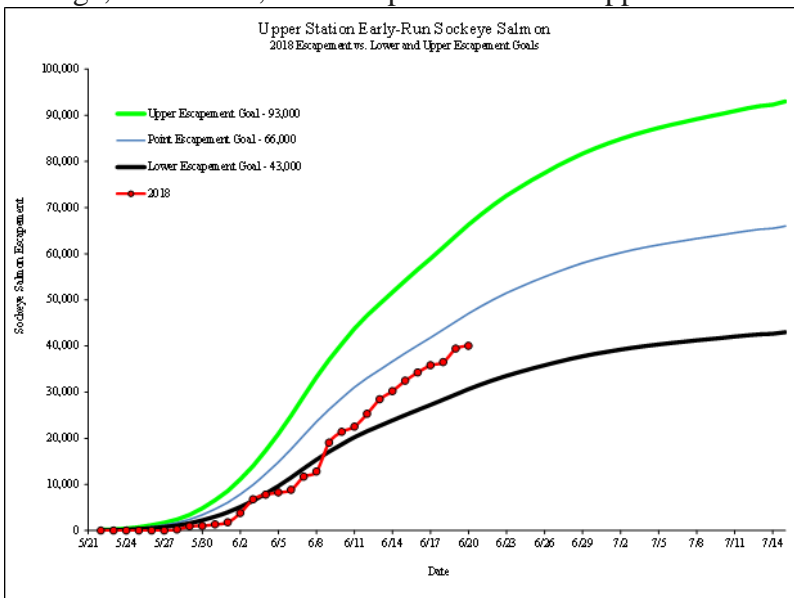
Ayakulik Update The water is high and the weir was pulled this morning. The crew did not pass many fish last night and Ayakulik is slipping behind on escapement. On average, at this date, we have passed 50% of Ayakulik’s early-run escapement. ADF&G hopes to get the weir back in the river in the next few days.



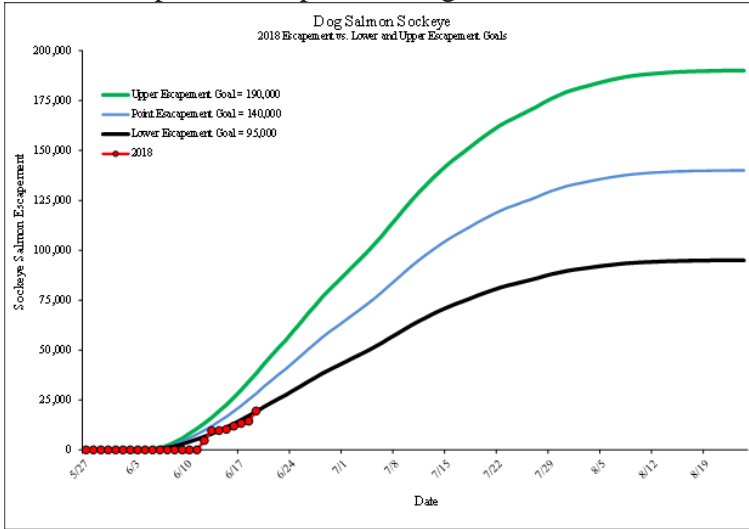
Chignik Update: Chignik finally passed a decent number of fish last night, but there is no Igvak fishery on the horizon.



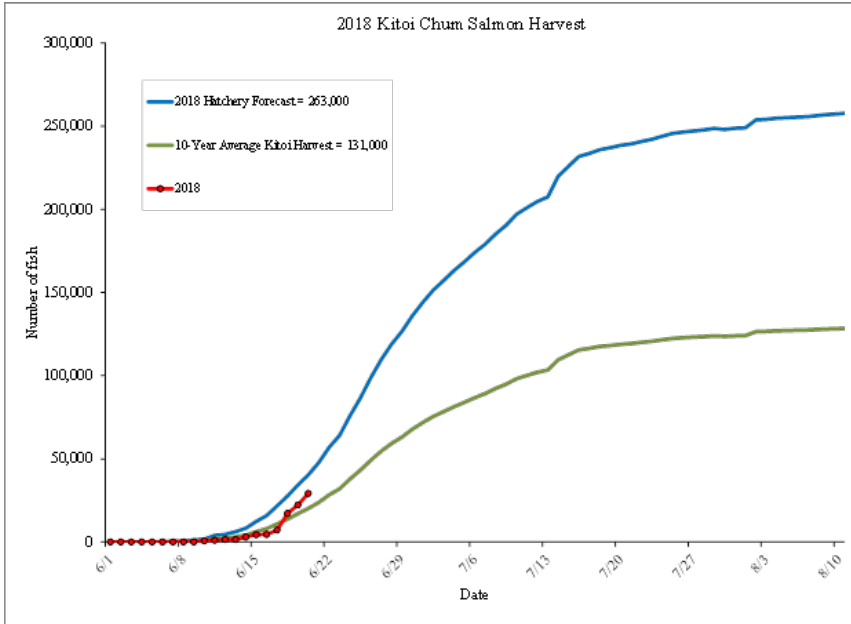
Upper Station Update: The current Upper Station early-run escapement is the second largest to date in the past 10 years. The crew is reporting more jumpers at the mouth. On average, at this date, we have passed 70% of Upper Station’s early-run escapement.



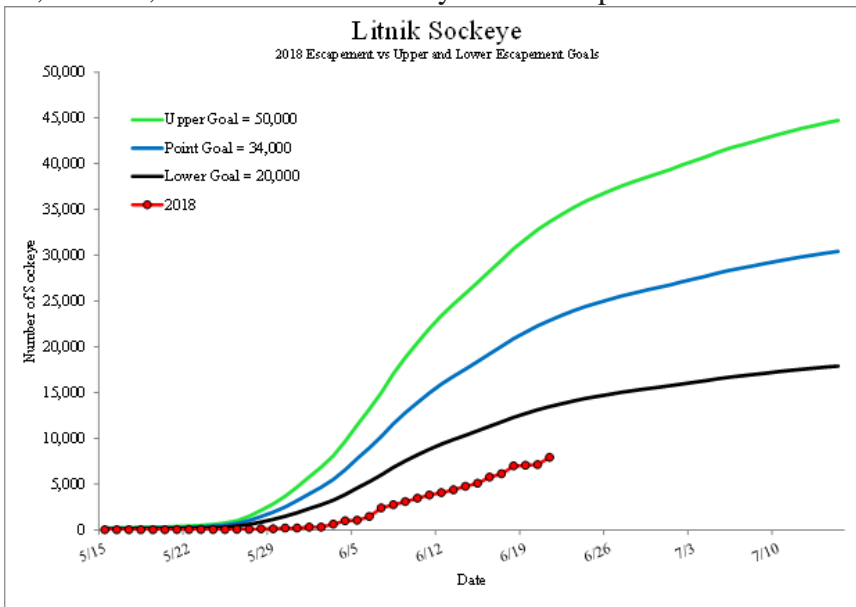
escapement is adequate and the department does not want mop up all the fish in the flats in case escapement drops of at Dog Salmon.



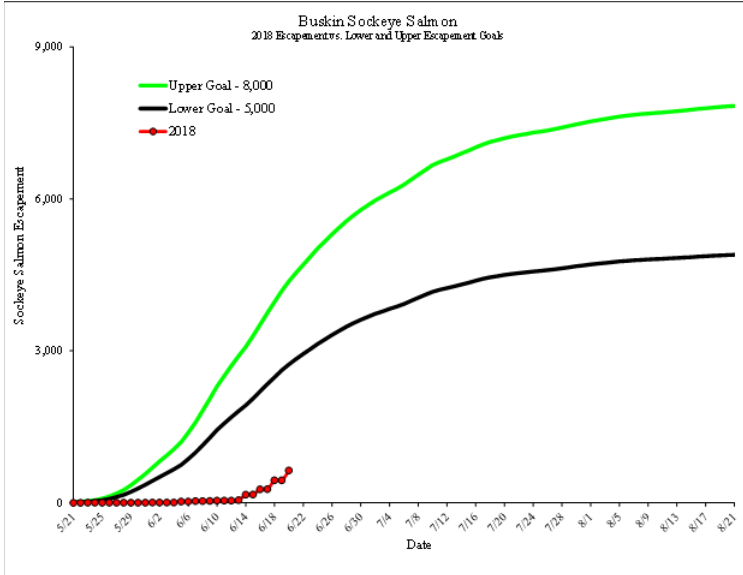
Kitoi Chum Update Effort is high and the chum harvest at the hatchery is the second largest in the past 10 years. The run currently looks below forecast but above average. Inner Kitoi will close tomorrow night (6/22) to allow for a larger sanctuary area for brood stock.



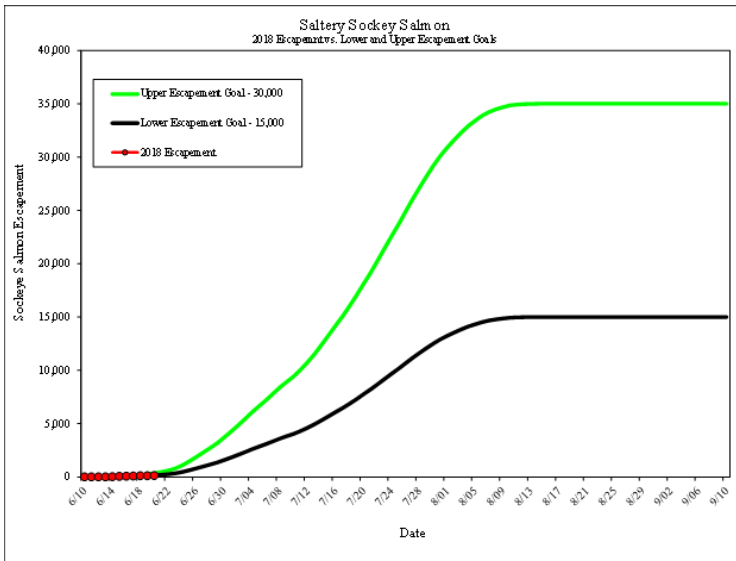
Litnik Update: With the sport and subsistence restrictions last week, escapement at Litnik has increased. If it ever looks like we will achieve the lower escapement goal of 20,000 fish, the subsistence fishery will be reopened.



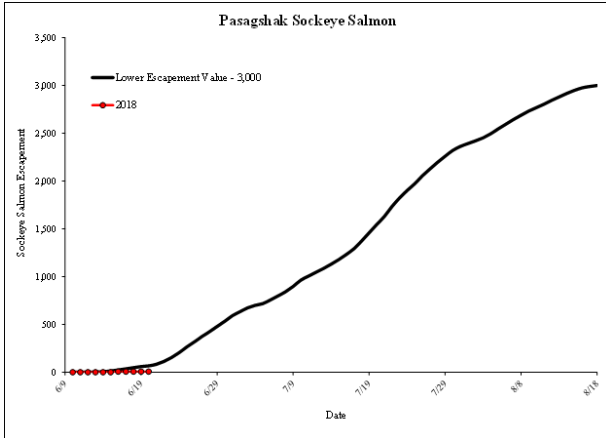
Buskin Update: With the sport and subsistence restrictions last week, escapement at Buskin has increased. If it ever looks like we will achieve the lower escapement goal of 5,000 fish, the subsistence fishery will be reopened.



Saltery Update: Saltery is off to a slow start. The crew is not reporting many fish in the river.



Pasagshak Update: Pasagshak is also off to a slow start. The crew is not reporting many fish in the river.



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***

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 Rivers. 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. Commercial harvest as of June 21 is approximately 248,000 fish throughout all districts with the majority of harvest occurring in the Nushagak district. 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:

- Kvichak River SEG = 2,000,000 – 10,000,000
- Alagnak River SEG = 320,000 minimum

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

The Sockeye Salmon cumulative counts and the 5 year average for June 21 are:

Kvichak River = Escapement project not started

Alagnak River = Escapement project not started

Naknek River = 66 fish, 5 year average = 14,158 fish.

Egegik River = 6,288 fish, 5 year average = 134,650 fish.

Ugashik River = Escapement project not started

Wood River = 109,686 fish, 5 year average = 95,657 fish.

Igushik River = Escapement project not started

Nushagak River = 64,478 fish, 5 year average = 156,451 fish.

Nushagak River = Chinook Salmon SEG = (55,000 – 120,000), 36,877 fish, 5 year average = 34,106.

Togiak River = Escapement project not started

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. To date, 41,022 Sockeye Salmon have been enumerated at the Alaska Department of Fish and Game operated weir, where 150,000 to 230,000 fish were anticipated. It is unlikely, based on the current rate of escapement, that the lower end of the escapement goal for early-run Sockeye Salmon in the Chignik River drainage will be achieved. The Federal In-season Manager, pursuant to delegated authority from the Federal Subsistence Board under ANILCA Title VIII section 815, issued an emergency special action (**8-RS-01-18**) to close Federal public waters of the Chignik River drainage to the harvest of Sockeye Salmon except by Federally qualified subsistence users who are in the possession of a Social and Cultural Harvest Permit beginning June 22, 2018, through July 31, 2018. A Social and Cultural permit allows a small number of fish to be harvested by a designated fishers within a village. This allowance was a request of federally qualified users within the CMA. The date of August 1, on average marks the end of the early run Sockeye Salmon as fish enumerated past this date are genetically apportioned to the late run. This action is necessary to ensure the conservation of healthy populations of Chignik River Sockeye Salmon and the continuation of subsistence uses. This action was taken in consultation with Alaska Department of Fish and Game fishery managers, Federally qualified subsistence users participating in two teleconferences on June 19, 2018 and a teleconference with the Bristol Bay Advisory Council on June 22, 2018.

The Chinook Salmon count as of June 21 is 18 fish. It is too early to evaluate the Chinook Salmon run at this time. The historical average quarter point of the Chinook Salmon run at the weir is July 7.

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:

In response to low Sockeye Salmon escapement to the Chignik River, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game has reduced by half the seine and drift gillnet fishing periods to 40 hours. The management action is designed to allow more fish to escape through the South Peninsula fisheries. The current commercial harvest in the Alaska Peninsula Management Area through June 20 is 1.2 million, of which 622,000 were Sockeye Salmon.

There are numerous salmon stocks and fisheries throughout the Alaska Peninsula, as well as the Aleutian Islands. Several Sockeye Salmon escapements (mostly on the north peninsula) are monitored with weirs including Nelson, Bear, Sandy, Ilnik, and Orzinski systems. Enumeration in 2018 has been affected by high water and runs are still developing. To date, counts appear to be lower than historical 5 year averages. The cumulative counts and 5 year average as of June 21:

- Nelson River = 646 fish, 5 year average = 4,520 fish.
- Bear River = 12,112 fish, 5 year average = 30,380 fish.
- Sandy River = 164 fish, 5 year average = 5,780 fish.
- Ilnik River = 7,601 fish, 5 year average of 21,264 fish.
- Orzinski Lake = 3 fish, 5 year average of 196 fish.

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

Federal Subsistence Fisheries Regulations for Chignik Area
http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish_shell/upload/chignik.pdf

Southcentral Alaska Web Links

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

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

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

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

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

Yukon River – Gerald Maschmann, Fish Biologist USFWS Fairbanks Office.
Gerald_Maschmann@fws.gov or
Fred Bue Fredrick_Bue@fws.gov
Emmonak Summer Office (907) 949-1798

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

Summer Season Outlook

The Summer Chum Salmon run is currently projecting an above average total run size of about 1.8 - 2 million fish at this time. A run of this size is large enough to provide for escapement and subsistence uses. A surplus of up to 1.25 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 run is projecting a below average to poor total run size of 150,000 – 160,000 fish at this time. This is below the lower end of the preseason forecast of 173,000 to 251,000 fish and is tracking similar to 2015. Subsistence conservation measures have been implemented to spread out the available subsistence harvest and meet escapement goals. Starting in the lower Yukon and moving up river with the

Chinook Salmon migration, subsistence has been placed on half their normal regulatory windows schedule, subsistence fishing has been restricted to 6-inch or smaller mesh gillnet gear, and subsistence periods have been cancelled to protect the first pulse.

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 9.75 through June 22, below the average of 13.83; 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 289.33 through June 22, above the average of 235.89. The Summer Chum Salmon drift gillnet project has a cumulative CPUE of 7,172.99 through June 22, well above the average of 2,471.40. 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 22 are 66,704 salmon; below the average of 85,025 salmon. The run is near the mid-point and the second pulse of Chinook Salmon appears to be passing the Pilot Station sonar at this time. The cumulative Summer Chum Salmon passage estimates past the Pilot Station sonar through June 22 are 515,161, above the median of 474,617 salmon. The Summer Chum Salmon run is just past the ¼ point.

Management Actions

Management decisions have been consistent with the preseason outlook and discussions held with fishermen prior to the start of the season. Subsistence fishing was unrestricted early in the season. As Chinook Salmon began entering the river, the regulatory windows subsistence salmon fishing schedule was implemented at half the normal fishing time. The schedule was implemented in up-river districts with the migration timing of Chinook Salmon. When assessment indicated that the Chinook Salmon run was entering below expectations, additional subsistence restrictions were put in place. These included pulling one to two periods and restricting fishing to 6-inch or smaller mesh gillnets. Subsistence fishing with dip nets or beach seines has not been implemented at this time. 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.

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. Through July 20, the preliminary Summer Chum Salmon harvest estimates are 106,740 fish with approximately 4,800 Chinook Salmon caught and released.

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 third YRDFA weekly teleconference occurred on June 19. Most reports from the lower Yukon were varied with some nearing completion of the summer harvests while some are just starting. Most people in the mid-river are just getting ready, but a Chinook Salmon was reported being caught as far up as Rapids.

KUSKOKWIM RIVER

In Season Manager – Ken Stahlnecker, Refuge Manager, Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge Contact kenneth_stahlnecker@fws.gov; (907) 543-3151 or Lewis_Coggins@fws.gov

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 16 and ending 10:00PM June 16, 2018. An estimated 8,600 (7,330-10,070) salmon were harvested. Chinook Salmon harvest was estimated at 5,480 (4,580-6,470). Chum Salmon harvest was estimated at 2,670 (2,150-3,270) and Sockeye Salmon harvest was estimated at 450 (300-630). A total of 488 drift boats were estimated to have occurred during this opportunity. Estimated Chinook salmon harvested on the Kuskokwim River as of June 16, 2018 was at 11,150.

There was one more fishing opportunity on June 24, 2018. There is no preliminary harvest data available at this time.

Test Fisheries:

As of June 24, the cumulative catch per unit of effort (CPUE) of Chinook Salmon at the Alaska Department of Fish and Game's Bethel Test Fishery is 304. Cumulative CPUE on this date during 2017 and 2016 were 148 and 378, respectively.

Cumulative CPUE for Chum Salmon is at 788. Cumulative CPUE on this date during 2017 and 2016 were 698 and 353, respectively. Cumulative CPUE for Sockeye Salmon is at 92. Cumulative CPUE on this date during 2017 and 2016 were 316 and 120, respectively.

Yukon-Kuskokwim-Interior Alaska Web Links***Federal Subsistence Management Fisheries News Releases:***

<http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/news/fishing/index.cfm>

Federal Subsistence Fisheries Regulations for Yukon-Northern Area

http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish_shell/upload/Yukon.pdf

Kuskokwim River Updates Hosted on OSM Website

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

Federal Subsistence Fisheries Regulations for Kuskokwim Area

http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish_shell/upload/Kusko.pdf

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

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

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

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

Weekly ADF&G Sport Fishing Reports for Interior Alaska:

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

Statewide ADF&G Fish counts:

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

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

(907) 443-2522 Ken_Adkisson@nps.gov

Norton Sound District

As of Thursday, June 21, due to high water, the ADF&G and Norton Sound Economic Development Corporation (NSEDC) have been unable to get any weirs or towers operational in order to count adult salmon escapement. Therefore, the department will use

harvest based management until the escapement counting projects are operational. Harvest based management compares the catch from a fishing period with catches from previous years during the same date, and takes into consideration fishing effort and weather conditions.

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 be used, but any king salmon captured must be immediately released. The department plans on offering one 24-hour subsistence salmon opening per week in the marine waters. Accordingly, the marine waters of the Subdistrict were opened for a 24-hour subsistence salmon fishing period from noon Tuesday, June 19 to noon Wednesday, June 20. Set gillnets were restricted to a mesh size of 6 inches or less.

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: Effective the evening of June 8 at midnight, all marine waters and fresh waters of Subdistrict 5 were closed to subsistence salmon fishing. However, the department plans on having one 24-hour subsistence salmon fishing period per week in the marine waters of the Subdistrict during favorable weather conditions. Accordingly, the marine waters of the Subdistrict were opened for a 24-hour subsistence salmon fishing period from noon Tuesday, June 19 to noon Wednesday, June 20. Set gillnets were restricted to a mesh size of 6 inches or less. The Shaktoolik River drainage will remain closed to subsistence salmon fishing until further notice. Gill nets used to target trout and whitefish in the Shaktoolik River and all other freshwater areas of the Subdistrict must have a mesh size no greater than 4 inches. Dip nets and cast nets may also be used, but any king salmon captured must be immediately released.

Subdistrict 4 (Norton Bay)

Subsistence Fishing: ADF&G implemented 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 were placed on a subsistence fishing schedule of two 36-hour periods per week. Periods run 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 fishing opened for 24 hours in the Subdistrict from 6 PM Saturday, June 23 until 6 PM Sunday, June 24. Permit holder were limited to 100 fathoms of net in aggregate length and gillnets restricted to a mesh size of 6 inches or smaller. The department forecast is for a well above average chum salmon run this year. The short commercial fishing opening will allow some utilization of an expected harvest surplus while not jeopardizing chum salmon escapement needs in the Subdistrict.

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 opened for 24 hours in the Subdistrict from 6 PM Saturday, June 23 until 6 PM Sunday, June 24. Permit holder were limited to 100 fathoms of net in aggregate length and gillnets restricted to a mesh size of 6 inches or smaller. The department forecast is for a well above average chum salmon run this year. The short commercial fishing opening will allow some utilization of an expected harvest surplus while not jeopardizing chum salmon escapement needs in the Subdistrict.

Subdistrict 2 (Golovin)

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

Commercial Fishing: Commercial fishing opened for 24 hours in the Subdistrict from 6 PM Saturday, June 23 until 6 PM Sunday, June 24. Permit holder were limited to 100 fathoms of net in aggregate length and gillnets restricted to a mesh size of 6 inches or smaller. The department forecast is for a well above average chum salmon run this year. The short commercial fishing opening will allow some utilization of an expected harvest surplus while not jeopardizing chum salmon escapement needs in the Subdistrict.

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 continue to be open seven days a week. All Nome Subdistrict freshwater subsistence areas and the marine waters west of Cape Nome are open to gillnet fishing for five days each week from 6 PM Wednesday until 6 PM Monday. Also effective June 15, beach seining for salmon opened in all subsistence areas of the Nome Subdistrict whenever subsistence gillnet fishing is open. Unless closed by emergency order, beach seining will remain open during gillnet fishing periods through August 15. Dip nets and cast nets can also be used anytime gillnet fishing is open. Also, effective June 15, all gillnet and beach seine fishing upstream of Boulder Creek on the Sinuk River was 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>