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## Advisory Announcement

*For Immediate Release: May 8, 2020*

**Time: 4:02 p.m.**

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**Kuskokwim Area Management Biologists  
(907) 267-2379**

### Kuskokwim River Salmon Fishery Announcement #2

#### Kuskokwim River Subsistence Fishery Outlook and Front-End Closure

#### Emergency Order #3-S-WR-01-20

This is an announcement from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) for subsistence fishermen in the Kuskokwim River Drainage.

#### **COVID-19**

Under Alaska's Health Mandates 10, 11, and 12, Subsistence fishing is Essential and is part of Alaska's Essential Services and Critical Infrastructure. Subsistence fishermen should ensure that all travel and other activities follow protocols in Alaska COVID-19 Health Mandates. COVID-19 Health Mandates may be found here: <https://gov.alaska.gov/home/covid19-healthmandates/>

#### **Chinook Salmon Forecast**

The 2020 Kuskokwim River Chinook salmon forecast is for a range of 193,000–261,000 fish. The drainage-wide Chinook salmon escapement goal is 65,000–120,000. If the run comes back as projected, the drainage-wide escapement goal is expected to be achieved and a full subsistence harvest may be realized. The 2020 season will be managed in accordance with the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Plan (5 AAC 07.365) with input from the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group. It is the intent of the department that the Kuskokwim River salmon stocks shall be managed in a conservative manner consistent with the Policy for the Management of Sustainable Salmon Fisheries under 5 AAC 39.222 to meet escapement goals and the subsistence priority.

#### **2019 Run and Harvest Outlook for Kuskokwim River Salmon**

	<b>Chinook</b>	<b>Chum</b>	<b>Sockeye</b>	<b>Coho</b>
<b>Projection:</b>	Average	Average	Above Average	Average
<b>Escapement:</b>	Expect to meet goals	Expect to meet goals	Expect to meet goals	Expect to meet goals
<b>Subsistence:</b>	Normal harvest	Normal harvest	Normal harvest	Normal harvest
<b>Commercial*:</b>	None	None	None	None

*\*No commercial buyer registered at this time.*

During the 2020 preseason meeting held by teleconference on May 5–6, the Kuskokwim Salmon Management Working Group supported the following preseason management actions:

**Subsistence fishing with gillnets in the Kuskokwim River will be closed during the following times and areas until further notice:**

- Sections 1 & 2: Beginning 12:01 a.m. Monday, June 1, 2020, the Kuskokwim River drainage from the Yukon Delta NWR boundary at the mouth of the Kuskokwim River to ADF&G markers approximately one-half mile upstream of the Tuluksak River mouth;
- Section 3: Beginning 12:01 a.m. Thursday, June 3, 2020, from the ADF&G markers approximately one-half mile upstream of the Tuluksak River mouth to the Yukon Delta Refuge boundary near Aniak;
- Section 4: Beginning 12:01 a.m. Thursday, June 9, 2020, from the Yukon Delta Refuge boundary near Aniak to the ADF&G regulatory markers near the Holitna River mouth; and
- Section 5: Beginning 12:01 a.m. Tuesday, June 11, 2020, upstream of the ADF&G regulatory markers located near the Holitna River mouth to the headwaters of the Kuskokwim River.

**The following tributary gillnet fishing closures go into effect beginning 12:01 a.m. Monday, June 1, 2020 until further notice:**

- The Kwethluk River drainage to regulatory markers at its confluence with Kuskokuak Slough.
- The Kasigluk and Kisaralik River drainages, including Old Kuskokuak Slough, to ADF&G regulatory markers at the confluence of Old Kuskokuak Slough with Kuskokuak Slough.
- The Tuluksak River drainage including its confluence with the Kuskokwim River and downstream approximately 1-mile to ADF&G regulatory markers.
- The Aniak River drainage to ADF&G regulatory markers at its confluence with the Kuskokwim River.
- All Kuskokwim River tributaries not specifically mentioned above within the Yukon Delta NWR will close to subsistence fishing with gillnets from their confluence with the Kuskokwim River upstream 100 yards. Subsistence fishing with gillnets will remain open upstream of that 100-yard closure area.

**The following subsistence fishing restrictions will also go into effect beginning 12:01 a.m. Monday, June 1, 2020 until further notice:**

**Subsistence fishing with hook and line for Chinook salmon will close until further notice.** Any Chinook salmon caught must be returned alive to the water.

**Subsistence fishing with fish wheels will be allowed until further notice.** Fish wheels are required to have a live box with no less than 45 cubic feet of water, must be checked at least every 6 hours. Fish wheels may be equipped with a chute and must be closely attended while in operation. All Chinook salmon must be returned alive to the water.

**Subsistence fishing with dip nets and beach seines will be allowed until further notice.** Any Chinook salmon caught in a dip net or beach seine must be returned immediately to the water alive.

Further announcements will be made from the Bethel Fish and Game office, on the State of Alaska web site (<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.main>), local radio stations, and Kuskokwim River Facebook Page (<https://www.facebook.com/KuskoRiverFishingADFG/>). News releases will be faxed to area villages.

**For additional information concerning this advisory announcement:**  
**ADF&G:** Nicholas Smith in Anchorage 907-267-2379 or Ben Gray 907-543-2331

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