



Advisory Announcement
For Immediate Release: July 1, 2020

CONTACT: Jeremy Botz and Charlie Russell
Finfish Area Management Biologists
(907) 424-3212

Prince William Sound Salmon Fishery Announcement #16

COPPER RIVER DISTRICT: The Copper River District will remain closed to commercial fishing. Permit holders are advised that the Copper River commercial fishery may open on short notice should indices of sockeye salmon abundance support fishing. A minimum of 17 hours advance notice of a fishery opening is anticipated. The Copper River District will open to subsistence fishing at 7:00 am on Thursday, July 2 for a 12-hour fishing period. Waters within the Chinook salmon inside closure area will be **OPEN** during this subsistence fishing period.

The grass bank marker line is defined in 5AAC 24.350(1)(A) with the exception of this year's extension of the closure line across Little Softuk (**see bold font below**). This closure line is defined with the following points:

<i>Point</i>	<i>Latitude</i>	<i>Longitude</i>
Point Whitshed South	60° 26.49' N.	145° 52.86' W.
Alaganik Slough North	60° 24.65' N.	145° 36.70' W.
Pete Dahl East	60° 20.44' N.	145° 29.14' W.
West Kokenhenik	60° 14.88' N.	145° 10.01' W.
East "East Side"	60° 14.83' N.	145° 03.36' W.
Coffee Creek East	60° 14.19' N.	144° 58.01' W.
Charlie Mohr North	60° 15.15' N.	144° 56.43' W.
Martin River North	60° 15.29' N.	144° 52.52' W.
Strawberry Reef	60° 13.93' N.	144° 50.66' W.
Little Softuk	60° 13.16' N.	144° 41.38' W.

Waters north of this line, within sloughs, and in Boswell Bay within the bay (5 AAC 24.350 (1)(A)) are closed to commercial and subsistence salmon fishing during all periods.

During the commercial fishing season, subsistence harvest may occur in the Copper River District concurrent in time and area with commercial fishing periods until the Copper River District is closed at the end of the season. **Additionally, waters of the Copper River District, including the Chinook salmon inside closure area, will be OPEN to subsistence fishing from 6:00 am to 10:00 pm on Saturday, July 4.** Subsistence users may obtain subsistence permits during regular business hours. The Cordova ADF&G office is open to the public Monday - Friday, 8:00 am - 12:00 pm and 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm. **Subsistence permits are not available outside of regular office hours.** Permit holders are encouraged to call the Cordova office at 907-424-3212 or report online (<https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/Harvest/>) to provide preliminary harvest reports to assist with inseason harvest tracking.

To date, the sonar count is the 14th lowest on record (1978-2020). Cumulative commercial harvest this year is the 4th lowest harvest to-date in the last 50 years. Cumulative sonar count through 6/30 is 387,106 fish whereas 458,271 fish are projected by this date. The 0600 count for 7/1 is 1,854 fish. For the week ending June 27, the Copper River Delta survey count was 13,035 sockeye salmon versus an anticipated range of 17,627 – 41,665.

BERING RIVER DISTRICT: The Bering River District will remain closed to commercial fishing.

COGHILL DISTRICT: The Coghill District, excluding waters of the Esther and Granite Bay subdistricts and waters of the WNH SHA and THA, will open to commercial drift gillnet harvest for a 24-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Thursday, July 2. **Waters of Granite Bay Subdistrict, within Esther Passage and on the western side of Esther Island north of 60° 52.66' N., including waters of Granite Bay, will open to commercial drift gillnet harvest for a 6-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Thursday, July 2. Regulatory closed waters within Granite Bay Subdistrict will not be in effect for this fishing period. Waters of Port Wells and College Fiord, north of 60° 55.81' N., and east of a line from Pakenham Point (61° 00.45' N., 148° 04.85' W.) to 60° 55.81' N., 148° 10.92' W., will open to commercial drift gillnet harvest for a 60-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Thursday, July 2. Effective from 8:00 am, Thursday, July 2 to 8:00 pm, Saturday, July 4, regulatory closed waters pertaining to the Coghill River, as specified in 5 AAC 24.350(6)(B)), will not be in effect. Commercial fishing will not be permitted within the bed or channel of the Coghill River at any stage of the tide.** Preliminary harvest estimates from the 48-hour period that started on Monday, June 27 are not yet available. As of June 30, 16,981 sockeye salmon have passed the Coghill River weir versus a cumulative anticipated range of 5,201 – 15,604 fish.

PWSAC recommends that the Esther Subdistrict, Granite Bay Subdistrict and the WNH THA and SHA remain closed for the commercial fishing period commencing Thursday, July 2. However, PWSAC is supportive of a cleanup fishery in the Granite Bay Subdistrict north of (and including) Granite Bay and to also include waters of Esther Passage in the Granite Bay Subdistrict to prevent loss of quality while ensuring area restrictions in the vicinity of WNH to prevent the harvest of fish intended for use as cost recovery and broodstock. **In response to COVID-19, all PWSAC facilities are closed to the public until further notice.**

ESHAMY DISTRICT: The Eshamy District, **north of 60°34.25'N, including Foul Bay, and south of 60°32.00'N,** will open to commercial gillnet harvest for a 12-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Thursday, July 2.

To facilitate cost recovery harvests and broodstock collection, PWSAC recommends that all waters within the Main Bay Subdistrict are closed for the commercial fishing period commencing Thursday, July 2. **In response to COVID-19, all PWSAC facilities are closed to the public until further notice.**

UNAKWIK DISTRICT: The Unakwik District will open to commercial drift gillnet and purse seine harvest for a 24-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Thursday, July 2.

SEINE FISHERIES: VFDA made two test sets in Port Valdez on Wednesday July 1, with a total catch of 100 pink salmon. VFDA is gauging run entry daily into Port Valdez and will start cost recovery as soon as it is warranted.

An aerial survey of the Eastern and Northern districts was conducted on Tuesday, June 30. Stream escapement observations were minimal during these surveys, which is to be expected for the date. The next aerial survey of the Eastern and Northern district is expected to occur Friday, July 10.

MONTAGUE DISTRICT: The Port Chalmers Subdistrict, **north of 60°12.56' N. lat. and east a line from 60° 12.56'N., 147° 20.25'W. to 60° 20.00'N., 147° 14.30'W.,** will open to purse seine fishing for **36-hours** beginning at 8:00 am on Thursday, July 2 and for **36-hours** beginning at 8:00 am on Saturday, July 4. A regular schedule of three fishing periods per week is anticipated to remain in effect until further notice. **Regulatory closed waters and anadromous stream closures within the Port Chalmers Subdistrict will not be in effect until further notice.** Preliminary harvest estimates from the 36-hour period that started on Saturday, June 27 were 84,562 chum salmon with 61 deliveries reported.

SOUTHWESTERN DISTRICT: The AFK Hatchery THA and SHA will open to purse seine fishing for **24-hours** beginning at 8:00 am on Thursday, July 2 and for **24-hours** beginning at 8:00 am on Saturday, July 4. A regular schedule of three fishing periods per week is anticipated to remain in effect until further notice. **Anadromous stream closures within the AFK Hatchery THA and SHA will not be in effect until further notice.** Preliminary harvest estimates from the 24-hour period that started on Monday, June 29 were 21,493 chum and 1,710 sockeye salmon with 34 deliveries reported.

In response to COVID-19, all PWSAC facilities are closed to the public until further notice.

Copies of the updated regulation booklet, *2019-2021 Commercial Salmon Fishing Regulations for Prince William Sound*, are available in the Cordova ADFG office

Under Alaska's Health Mandates 10, 11, 12, and 17 commercial fishing is an Essential Business and is part of Alaska's Essential Services and Critical Infrastructure. Commercial fishermen should ensure that all travel and other activities in support of commercial fishing operations follow protocols in Alaska COVID-19 Health Mandates. COVID-19 Health Mandates may be found here: <https://gov.alaska.gov/home/covid19-healthmandates/>.

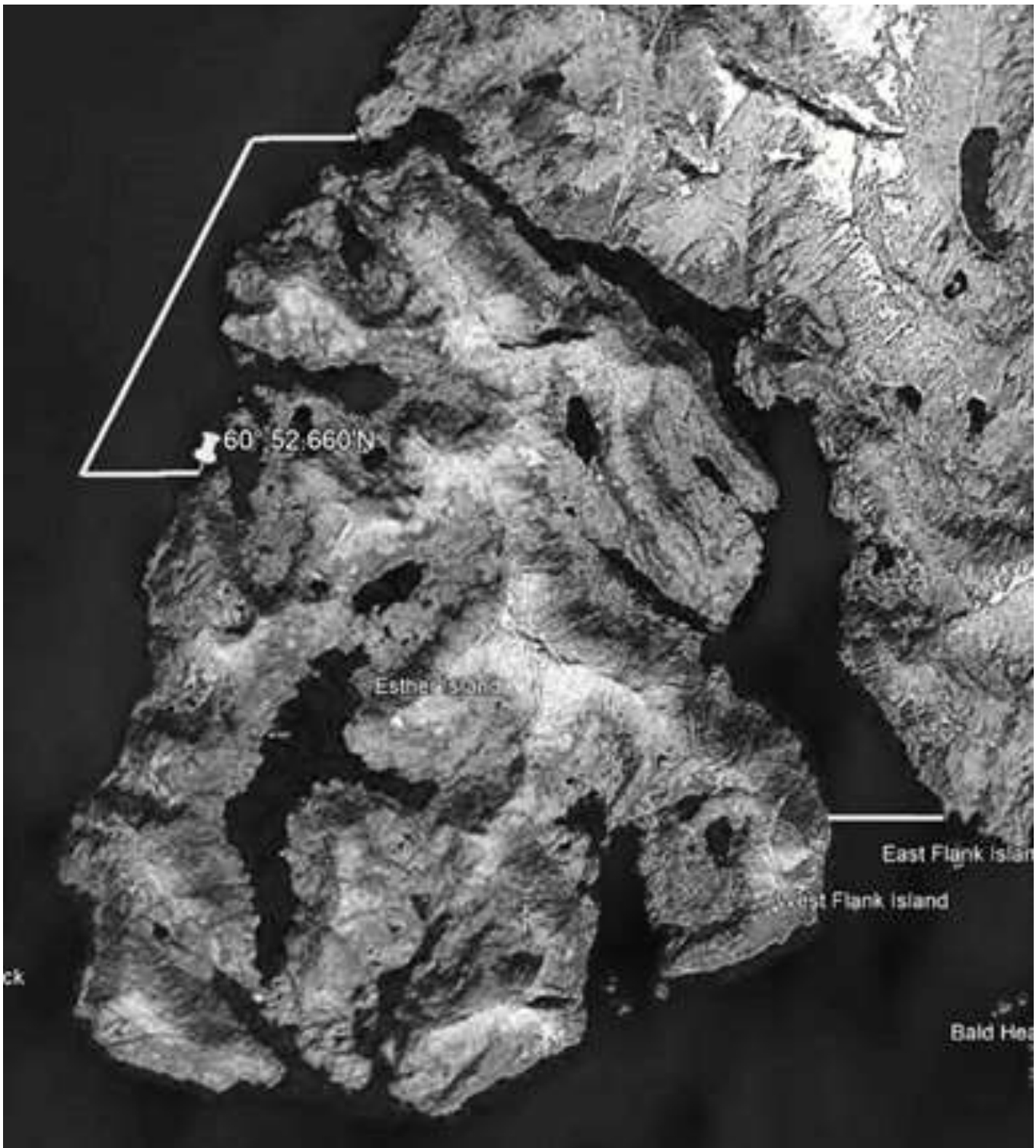
The next scheduled salmon fisheries announcement is anticipated to be at 2:00 pm Saturday, July 4.

Announcement recordings are available for **gillnet fisheries at 907-424-7535 and seine fisheries at 907-424-7345. In addition, announcement recordings are available in Anchorage at 267-2843.**

Additionally, announcements, inseason harvest data, and escapement data are available at the following web address: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareapws.main> (Prince William Sound and Copper River homepage).

Unless otherwise specified, all openings are clock openings based on Alaska Daylight Time, which is based on Coordinated Universal Time and may be obtained by calling 303-499-7111.

The department encourages commercial permit holders to renew their licenses early and to check their CFEC vessel registration stickers to make sure they are current. The department also encourages permit holders to report observed violations to Wildlife Safeguard at 800-478-3377. Reports are anonymous and cash rewards may be paid for successful prosecution of violations.



Coghill District – Port Wells and College Fiord line.



Eshamy District – north and south Crafton Island Subdistrict areas.

