

Division of Commercial Fisheries
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Advisory Announcement

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COMMERCIAL SALMON FISHING TO OPEN IN SHAKTOOLIK & UNALAKLEET

Commercial salmon fishing will be open in Subdistricts 5 and 6, the Shaktoolik and Unalakleet Subdistricts for 24 hours from 6 p.m. Saturday, August 15 until 6 p.m. Sunday, August 16. Permit holders are limited to 100 fathoms of gillnet in aggregate length and gillnets must have a mesh size of 6 inches or smaller.

Silver salmon escapement has been below average in Shaktoolik and Unalakleet and the usual two 48-hour commercial fishing periods each week have been reduced to one 24-hour fishing period each week. The silver catches in last week's fishing period were lower than expected in Shaktoolik and much lower than expected in Unalakleet. Although the Shaktoolik catch per unit of effort (CPUE) was double the Unalakleet CPUE, the higher Shaktoolik CPUE was likely the effect of one-third less permit holders fishing in Shaktoolik compared to Unalakleet.

Historically mid-August has had the peak commercial silver catches in Shaktoolik and Unalakleet and this 24-hour commercial fishing period will help to determine if there is any improvement in the silver run. The silver run throughout Norton Sound has been much lower than expected, but oddly this year the script has been flipped with a better silver run in northern Norton Sound than in southern Norton Sound.

Here are the cumulative escapement counts:

North River: 1,065 kings, 1,020 chums, 654,000 pinks, 120 sockeyes, 630 silvers

Shaktoolik River: 933 kings, 9,100 chums, 1.9 million pinks, 90 sockeyes, 1,370 silvers

Ungalik River: 135 kings, 7,900 chums, 970,000 pinks, 220 sockeyes, 1,080 silvers

Inglutalik River: 930 silvers

Kwiniuk River: 414 kings, 4,900 chums, 1.7 million pinks, 87 sockeyes, 2,230 silvers

Fish River: Project finished on 8/8; 78 kings, 9,000 chums, 2.7 million pinks, 18 sockeyes, 3,000 silvers

Solomon River: 8 kings, 790 chums, 464,000 pinks, 93 sockeyes, 256 silvers

Nome River: 8 kings, 2,200 chums, 2.1 million pinks, 183 sockeyes, 410 silvers

Snake River: 6 kings, 610 chums, 360,000 pinks, 220 sockeyes, 90 silvers

Pilgrim River: 65 kings, 5,400 chums, 103,000 pinks, 13,600 sockeyes, 190 silvers

COVID-19

Under Alaska's Health Mandates 10, 17, and 18, 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/>