



## Advisory Announcement

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### **2022 Yukon River Salmon Fall Fishery Announcement #7** **Fall Update #3, Yukon Area Salmon Fishery**

Districts Affected: Yukon Area

The 2022 fall chum salmon run size is anticipated to be critically low, similar to this season's summer chum salmon that was the second lowest on record. The fall chum salmon projection based on inseason assessment projects indicates a run size well below 300,000 fish. Mixed stock analysis (MSA) was applied to the passage estimates at the Yukon River mainstem sonar near Pilot Station to remove summer chum salmon and resulted in an estimate of 25,000 fall chum salmon in the river as of August 6. The current projection does not meet the threshold of 300,000 fish needed to allow subsistence fishing according to the Fall Chum Salmon Management Plan. In addition, it is unlikely to meet the drainagewide escapement goal of 300,000–600,000 fall chum salmon, tributary escapement goals and Canadian treaty objectives. Therefore, subsistence fishing for fall chum salmon will be closed. Selective gear can be used to target nonsalmon and salmon other than Chinook and chum salmon in most districts.

Lower Yukon River assessment projects are tracking well below average for fall chum salmon. The fall chum salmon run is approaching the historical midpoint at the sonar project near Pilot Station based on median run timing. Returns of Yukon and Kuskokwim chum salmon stocks are continuing to be some of the lowest on record.

Coho salmon have begun to enter the Yukon River, and the bulk of the run is expected to pass the Lower Yukon Test Fishery (LYTF) between August 13 and 24. The primary parent year for coho salmon this year is from the escapements of 2018. This year's coho run size is anticipated to be below average to average (average is 233,000 fish). Coho salmon have started to arrive slightly later than average in the Yukon River assessment projects.

The inseason salmon management teleconferences hosted by the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association (YRDFA) are held Tuesdays at 1:00 p.m. The calls focus on relaying assessment and management updates and local concerns. There is important fisheries research being done and the YRDFA teleconference is a great way to discuss all aspects of Yukon River fisheries and to connect with other communities, research projects, and managers all the way up the Yukon River. To participate, call 800-315-6338 and enter code: YUKON# (98566#).

### **Fall Assessment Projects**

All projects that handle fish (fall season LYTF, Mt. Village Test Fishery, Pilot Station, and Eagle sonar) are making efforts to reduce salmon mortality and distribute test fish catches to community members. Healthy salmon are released alive from the test nets. Injured salmon and mortalities are distributed to community members by Tribal councils or on a first come first-served basis from a public dock.

Daily, cumulative, and historical data for most of the assessment projects listed in this section can be accessed online at [www.adfg.alaska.gov/yukonfishcounts](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/yukonfishcounts).

Lower Yukon River Cooperative Fall Drift Test Fishing / ADF&G, YDFDA

Fall season operations began on July 16 using 6-inch mesh gear to target fall chum and coho salmon. As of August 6, the fall chum salmon cumulative CPUE was 49.80 which is below the average of 577.11 for this date. The first coho salmon was captured on August 4 in this project.

Mountain Village Drift Test Fishing / Asacarsarmiut Tribal Council

Fall season operations began on July 18. As of August 6, the fall chum salmon cumulative CPUE was 108.00 which is below the average of 790.55 for that date.

Sonar Project near Pilot Station / ADF&G

The sonar project operated near Pilot Station transitioned to fall season counts on July 19. As of August 6, the cumulative passage is approximately 100,000 chum salmon. This compares to a median cumulative passage of 260,000 chum salmon for this date. The mid-point for chum salmon passing after July 18 is typically on August 9 for this project. Genetic stock proportions were applied to the sonar passage counts and resulted in an estimate of 25,000 fall chum salmon that have come into the river since July 19. The mid-point of the MSA fall chum salmon run at the mainstem sonar operated near Pilot Station typically occurs on August 14. Coho salmon have been captured in this project since July 27 and as of August 6 the cumulative passage is approximately 1,190 fish. This compares to a median cumulative passage of 4,900 coho salmon for this date.

Teedriinjik (Chandalar) Sonar / USFWS

Sonar crew is on site and preparing the sonar to count fall chum salmon.

Sheenjek River Sonar / ADF&G

This sonar project typically begins counting fall chum salmon the second week of August. The project on the Sheenjek River is being reinstated and has historical escapement counts from 1974 through 2012.

Eagle Sonar / ADF&G and Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO)

This project will transition from counting Chinook to fall chum salmon later in August.

Porcupine River Sonar / Yukon Territory Canada / DFO

This project will transition from counting Chinook to fall chum salmon later in August.

Fishing Branch River Weir/Sonar / Yukon Territory Canada / DFO

This project will count fall chum salmon sometime in late August to early September.

**Fall Season Management Strategy**

The 2022 fall chum salmon projection is critically low and below the 300,000 threshold in the Fall Chum Salmon Management Plan to allow any subsistence fishing at this time. Subsistence fishermen should plan for continued fishing closures to conserve fall chum salmon. The Coastal District through Subdistricts 5-A, 5-B, and 5-C have transitioned to fall season management. Subsistence salmon fishing is closed, except for the use of selective gear to target nonsalmon and salmon other than chum and Chinook salmon. Based on fishermen's reports, pink salmon are the main salmon being caught in the Lower Yukon Area at this time. Coho salmon are beginning to show up in the Lower Yukon Area this past week. The remaining upriver subdistricts will transition to fall season management as the fall chum salmon migration reaches those areas.

**Summer Season Assessment**

Subdistrict 5-D and District 6 on the Yukon and Tanana rivers continue to be managed for Chinook and summer chum salmon and are closed to salmon fishing. Assuming late run timing, the Chinook salmon run at Eagle is estimated to be close to 90% complete. The cumulative passage of Chinook salmon entering Canada is below

average and the lowest on record. Current projections indicate that the lower end of the Canadian IMEG of 42,500 fish will not be met. Passage of Chinook salmon at all U.S. assessment projects are also below average and escapement goals are unlikely to be met.

Low numbers of Chinook and summer chum salmon are continuing to pass the project on the Salcha river, but counts are well below average. The 2022 summer chum salmon run was the second weakest on record and preliminary estimates indicate that the drainage-wide escapement goal of 500,000 to 1.2 million summer chum salmon was not met. To protect the spawning escapements of Chinook and summer chum salmon, fishing will be closed for the remainder of the summer season.

### **Summer Assessment Projects**

#### Chena River Tower / ADF&G

Operations ended on August 5. Cumulative passage was 355 Chinook salmon, which is below the average of 5,890 fish for this date; and 897 summer chum salmon, which is below the median cumulative passage of 7,198 fish for this date. Counts are visual this year due to issues with the sonar unit.

#### Salcha Tower / ADF&G

Counts began on July 2. As of August 7, cumulative passage is 922 Chinook salmon, which is below the average of 8,101 fish for this date; and 1,189 summer chum salmon, which is below the median cumulative passage of 18,910 fish for this date. Counts are visual due to issues with the sonar unit.

#### Eagle Sonar / ADF&G

As of August 7, cumulative passage is 10,918 Chinook salmon, which is below the average cumulative passage of 50,763 fish for this date. The Interim Management Escapement Goal for Canada-origin Chinook salmon is 42,500–55,000 fish. The goal is assessed post-season using the Eagle sonar count minus the estimated U.S. and Canadian harvest of Chinook salmon above the sonar site. It is not expected that border passage objectives will be achieved.

### **Stock Identification**

The fourth stratum of chum salmon genetic samples from the Pilot Station sonar test fishery (from July 19 through August 28) consisted of 85% summer chum salmon, of which 40% were lower river stocks, 42% were bound for the middle Yukon River, and 3% were bound for the Tanana River. The Tanana River and middle river stock proportions are well above average, and the lower summer stock proportions are only slightly above average for this time period. The fall chum salmon component (15%) was much lower than the 2004–2021 average of 34% at this point in the run. The Border U.S. (Teedriinjik, Sheenjok, and Draanjik) stocks are arriving first which is normal relative to the arrival of the Canadian mainstem and Tanana River fall stocks.

### **Age, Sex, and Length Composition**

The age composition of 25 chum salmon sampled from the drift gillnets in the LYTF project through July 30, consisted of 58% age-4 and 42% age-5 fish, which is near the 1983–2021 average. The percentage of female chum salmon through August 6 was 48% compared to the historical average (1986–2021) of 55%. The average length of 566 mm is well below the historical average of 592 mm from 1981–2020.

The age composition of 327 Chinook salmon sampled from the drift gillnets in the Pilot Station test fishery through July 27 was 12% age-4, 36% age-5, 46% age-6 and 6% age-7 fish. The percentage of age-6 and age-7 fish and the percentage of females (53%) were above average. Chinook salmon within each age class were smaller than the recent 10-year average and the average length of 719 mm across all age classes was smaller than the recent 10-year average length of 737 mm.

The age composition of the 54 Chinook salmon sampled from the drift gillnets in the Eagle test fishery through July 31 was 6% age-4, 32% age-5, 57% age-6 and 6% age-7 fish. The percentage of age-6 and age-7 fish and the percentage of females (48%) were above average. Chinook salmon within each age class were smaller than the recent 10-year average. However, the average length of 774 mm across all age classes was the same as the recent 10-year average length of 774 mm because of the above average proportion of age-6 and age-7 fish increasing the overall average length.

### **Current Subsistence Management Actions**

Subsistence salmon fishing has been closed to protect Chinook, summer chum, and fall chum salmon as they migrate upriver. The opportunity to harvest nonsalmon with 4-inch or smaller mesh gillnets is available during salmon closures; however, 4-inch or smaller mesh gillnets are restricted to 60 feet or shorter length. Fishermen should fish this nonsalmon gear in areas where resident species are more likely to be encountered.

Due to the low run sizes, we are encouraging fishermen to target nonsalmon and to release Chinook and chum salmon alive from nonsalmon gear types to protect future salmon runs. Pink and sockeye salmon may be retained. As districts transition to fall season management, coho salmon may be retained and manned fish wheels may be used while releasing chum and Chinook salmon alive. Other legal gear types to take nonsalmon include hook and line with a rod or pole, up to and including the Nulato River. All Yukon River districts may also use hand line, longline, fyke net, dip net, beach seines, and spear.

The USFWS Federal Inseason Manager has concurrently issued Emergency Special Actions 2-FC-01-22, 2-FC-02-22, and 2-FC-03-22 to close Federal public waters to the harvest of fall chum in the Coastal District and Districts 1, 2, 3, 4 and Subdistrict 5-A, 5-B, and 5-C. Emergency special action 2-FC-04-22 announced the transition dates for subdistricts 5-D Lower, Middle and Upper (for the same beginning effective dates listed in this announcement). Fishermen must be Federally-qualified subsistence users to harvest coho salmon in Federal public waters. The Federal Emergency Special Actions can be found online at <https://www.doi.gov/subsistence/fisheries-special-actions>.

**Coastal District, District 1, District 2, District 3, and the Innoko River** (including Chevak, Hooper Bay, Scammon Bay, Emmonak, Nunam Iqua, Alakanuk, Kotlik, Mountain Village, Pitkas Point, St. Mary's, Pilot Station, Marshall, Russian Mission, Holy Cross, and Shageluk):

**The transition to fall season management is complete, and fishing for chum and Chinook salmon is closed.** Gillnets larger than 4-inch mesh are not allowed. Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon but are restricted to 60 feet or shorter length. Manned fish wheels, dip nets, and hook and line gear may be used for nonsalmon and pink, sockeye, and coho salmon; however, chum and Chinook salmon must be released alive. While using manned fish wheels, chum and Chinook salmon may not enter a livebox.

**District 4 and Koyukuk River** (including Anvik, Grayling, Kaltag, Nulato, Koyukuk, Galena, Ruby, Huslia, Hughes, Alatna, Allakaket, and Bettles):

**The transition to fall season management is complete, and fishing for chum and Chinook salmon is closed.** Gillnets larger than 4-inch mesh are not allowed. Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon but are restricted to 60 feet or shorter length. Manned fish wheels, dip nets, and hook and line gear may be used for nonsalmon and pink, sockeye, and coho salmon; however, chum and Chinook salmon must be released alive. While using manned fish wheels, chum and Chinook salmon may not enter a livebox. Hook and line gear may be used up to and including the Nulato River.

A subsistence fishing permit is required for all species in the South and Middle forks of the Koyukuk River above Bettles including the community of Wiseman. By regulation, gillnet gear in the permit area is closed for all species from July 1 to August 19. If you are outside the permit area, contact the Fairbanks office at 907-459-7274 for a subsistence harvest calendar.

**Subdistricts 5-A, 5-B, and 5-C** (including Tanana and Rampart):

**The transition to fall season management is complete, and fishing for chum and Chinook salmon is closed.** Fish wheels and gillnets larger than 4-inch mesh are not allowed. Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon but are restricted to 60 feet or shorter length. Manned fish wheels and dip nets may be used for nonsalmon and coho salmon; however, chum and Chinook salmon must be released alive. While using manned fish wheels, chum and Chinook salmon may not enter a livebox.

A subsistence permit is required to fish for all species in Subdistrict 5-C from the westernmost tip of Garnet Island upstream to ADF&G regulatory markers located two miles downstream of Waldron Creek (Dalton Highway bridge area).

**Subdistrict 5-D Lower** (from an ADF&G regulatory marker two miles downstream of Waldron Creek upstream to the Hadweenzic River and all other adjacent tributaries, including the communities of Stevens Village and Beaver):

**The transition to fall season management begins 12:01 a.m. Tuesday, August 9. Chum and Chinook salmon fishing will remain closed.** Manned fish wheels and dip nets may be used for nonsalmon and coho salmon. However, chum and Chinook salmon must be released alive. While using manned fish wheels, chum and Chinook salmon may not enter a livebox.

A subsistence permit is also required to fish for all species in the portion of Subdistrict 5-D Lower from an ADF&G regulatory marker two miles downstream of Waldron Creek upstream to the mouth of Dall River. If you are outside the permit area, contact the Fairbanks office at 907-459-7274 for a subsistence harvest calendar.

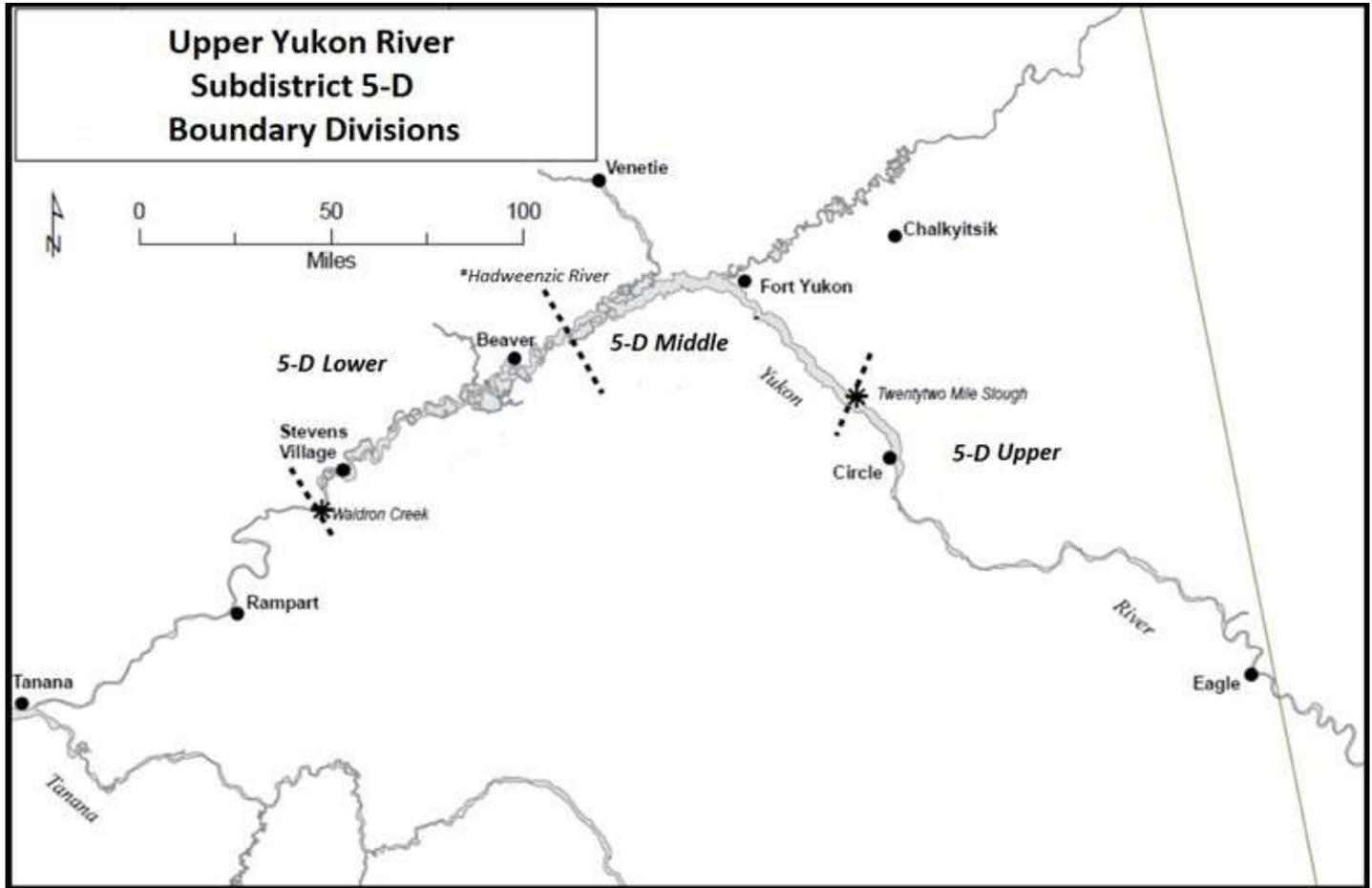
**Subdistrict 5-D Middle** (from the Hadweenzic River upstream to 22 Mile Slough, including the Porcupine River, all other adjacent tributaries, and the communities of Venetie, Chalkyitsik, Birch Creek, and Fort Yukon):

**The transition to fall season management begins 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, August 17. Chum and Chinook salmon fishing will remain closed.** Manned fish wheels and dip nets may be used for nonsalmon and coho salmon. However, chum and Chinook salmon must be released alive. While using manned fish wheels, chum and Chinook salmon may not enter a livebox. In Birch Creek, and the subsistence area of Beaver Creek below Moose Creek, gillnet mesh size may not exceed 3 inches.

**Subdistrict 5-D Upper** (from 22 Mile Slough to the U.S./Canada border, including all adjacent tributaries and the communities of Circle and Eagle):

**The transition to fall season management begins 12:01 a.m. Friday, August 26. Chum and Chinook salmon fishing will remain closed.** Manned fish wheels and dip nets may be used for nonsalmon and coho salmon. However, chum and Chinook salmon must be released alive. While using manned fish wheels, chum and Chinook salmon may not enter a livebox.

A subsistence permit is also required to fish for all species in the portion of Subdistrict 5-D Upper from the upstream mouth of 22 Mile Slough to the U.S./Canada border. If you are outside the permit area, contact the Fairbanks office at 907-459-7274 for a subsistence harvest calendar.



**Subdistrict 6-A and Kantishna River** (from the mouth of the Tanana River upstream to the eastern edge of the mouth of the Kantishna River, including the Kantishna River drainage, Lake Minchumina, and Manley):

**Chum and Chinook salmon fishing is closed.** Fish wheels and gillnets larger than 4-inch mesh are not allowed. Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon but are restricted to 60 feet or shorter length. Dip nets may be used for nonsalmon; however, Chinook and summer chum salmon must be released alive. Subsistence fishing for nonsalmon within Lake Minchumina is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 6-inch or smaller mesh gillnets.

**Subdistrict 6-B and Old Minto Area** (from eastern edge of the Kantishna River upstream to the Wood River, including Minto and Nenana):

**Chum and Chinook salmon fishing is closed.** Fish wheels and gillnets larger than 4-inch mesh are not allowed. Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon but are restricted to 60 feet or shorter length. Dip nets may be used for nonsalmon; however, Chinook and summer chum salmon must be released alive.

Subsistence fishing for nonsalmon is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 6-inch or smaller mesh gillnets in the Tolovana River drainage, including Minto Flats. Note, a subsistence pike permit is required, see details below.

**Upper Tanana Area** (the Tanana River from the confluence with the mouth of Volkmar River on the north bank and the mouth of the Johnson River on the south bank upstream to the Tanana River headwaters, including Delta Junction area, Dot Lake, Tanacross, Tetlin, Tok, Northway, and Nabesna):

**Chum and Chinook salmon fishing is closed.** Fish wheels and gillnets larger than 4-inch mesh are not allowed. Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon but are restricted to 60 feet or shorter length. Dip nets may be used for nonsalmon; however, Chinook and summer chum salmon must be released alive.

A reminder to fishermen that a subsistence permit is required for salmon fishing in the Tanana River drainage up to the Wood River (Subdistrict 6-A, 6-B, and Kantishna River drainage). A subsistence salmon permit is not required in Lake Minchumina. A subsistence fishing permit is required to fish for northern pike in the Tolovana River drainage, including Minto Flats and for all fish species in the Upper Tanana Area.

Subsistence harvest calendars and subsistence fishing permits are available from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game Fairbanks office 907-459-7274 or online at [www.adfg.alaska.gov/store/](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/store/).

### **Personal Use Management Actions**

**Subdistrict 6-C Salmon** (Personal use fishery from the regulatory marker at the mouth of the Wood River upstream to the downstream mouth of the Salcha River, which includes the communities of Fairbanks, North Pole, and Salcha):

**Personal Use salmon fishing is closed, and periods are cancelled until further notice.**

### **Personal Use Whitefish and Sucker Fishing**

**Fairbanks Nonsubsistence Area** (a portion of the Tanana River drainage from the Wood River upstream to the mouth of the Volkmar River on the north bank and the mouth of the Johnson River on the south bank, which includes Fairbanks, North Pole, Salcha, and Delta Junction):

**Personal Use whitefish and sucker fishing with gillnets and fish wheels follows the Subdistrict 6-C Personal Use salmon fishing schedule and is closed until further notice.**

Fishing for whitefish and suckers in this area with other gear types remains open 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, subject to permit stipulations. As a reminder, only whitefish and suckers may be retained in this fishery.

A reminder to personal use fishermen that a personal use whitefish and sucker permit and current sport fishing license are required to fish for these species in the Fairbanks Nonsubsistence Area. Permits and licenses are available from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game Fairbanks office or online at [www.adfg.alaska.gov/store/](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/store/).

### **Federal Special Action**

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) have coordinated on this advisory announcement. Fishermen must be Federally qualified subsistence users to harvest coho salmon in Federal public waters. For information regarding Federal subsistence fishing regulations contact Holly Carroll at 907-351-3029.

This is an announcement by the ADF&G in cooperation with the USFWS.



Federal Special Actions will be posted on [www.doi.gov/subsistence/fisheries-special-actions](http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/fisheries-special-actions) and shared on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/subsistencealaska](https://www.facebook.com/subsistencealaska).

ADF&G Advisory Announcements will be posted on [www.cfnews.adfg.alaska.gov/](http://www.cfnews.adfg.alaska.gov/) and shared on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/YukonRiverFishingADFG](https://www.facebook.com/YukonRiverFishingADFG).

ADF&G subsistence fishing permits are available at [www.adfg.alaska.gov/store](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/store)

