



Advisory Announcement

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2022 Yukon River Salmon Fall Fishery Announcement #12

Fall Update #7, Yukon Area Salmon Fishery

Districts Affected: Yukon Area

The Emmonak ADF&G Office closed for the season. Please contact the Fairbanks ADF&G Office at (907) 459-7274 for the remainder of the year.

The Yukon River fall chum salmon run is projecting to be the third lowest on record (1974–2021), while the coho salmon run is projecting to be the second lowest (1995–2021; Figures 1 and 2). The fall chum salmon run is projected to be 240,000 fish compared to a historical run size of 1 million fish. The coho salmon run is projected to be near 100,000 fish compared to a historical run size of 208,000 fish. Both the fall chum and coho salmon runs are nearly complete entering the Yukon River. According to the Fall Chum Salmon Management Plan, the inseason projections do not meet the threshold of 300,000 fish needed to allow subsistence, personal use, or commercial fishing. The fall chum salmon run is unlikely to meet the drainagewide escapement goal of 300,000-600,000 fish, tributary escapement goals, and Canadian treaty objectives. Subsistence fishermen can expect the closures for fall chum salmon to last through at least September, similar to 2021.

Alaska Department of Fish and Game, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Yukon Delta Fisheries Development Association are conducting a cooperative radio tagging project on coho salmon operated out of the community of Russian Mission. Please report any tagged coho salmon observed or harvested within the Yukon River drainage to help us all gain knowledge on their migration. Contact andrew.padilla@alaska.gov or call (907) 459-7274.

Fall Assessment Projects

All projects that handle fish (fall season Lower Yukon Test Fishery, 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.

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 September 5, the fall chum salmon cumulative catch per unit effort (CPUE) was 572.32, which is below the average of 1,497.35 for this date. The cumulative CPUE for coho salmon was 42.65, which is well below the median of 376.17.

Mountain Village Drift Test Fishing / Asacarsarmiut Tribal Council

Fall season operations began on July 18. As of September 4, the fall chum salmon cumulative CPUE was 584.86, which is below the average of 1,963.79 for this date. The cumulative CPUE for coho salmon was 229.27, which is well below the median of 898.77.

Sonar Project near Pilot Station / ADF&G

The sonar project operated near Pilot Station transitioned to fall season counts on July 19. As of September 5, the cumulative passage was approximately 323,000 chum salmon. This compares to a median cumulative passage of 706,000 chum salmon for this date. Chum salmon genetic stock proportions were applied to the sonar passage counts and resulted in an estimate of 235,000 fall chum salmon that have come into the river since July 19 (Figure 1). As of September 5, the cumulative passage of coho salmon is approximately 89,600 fish, which is below the median of 142,000 fish through this date (Figure 2).

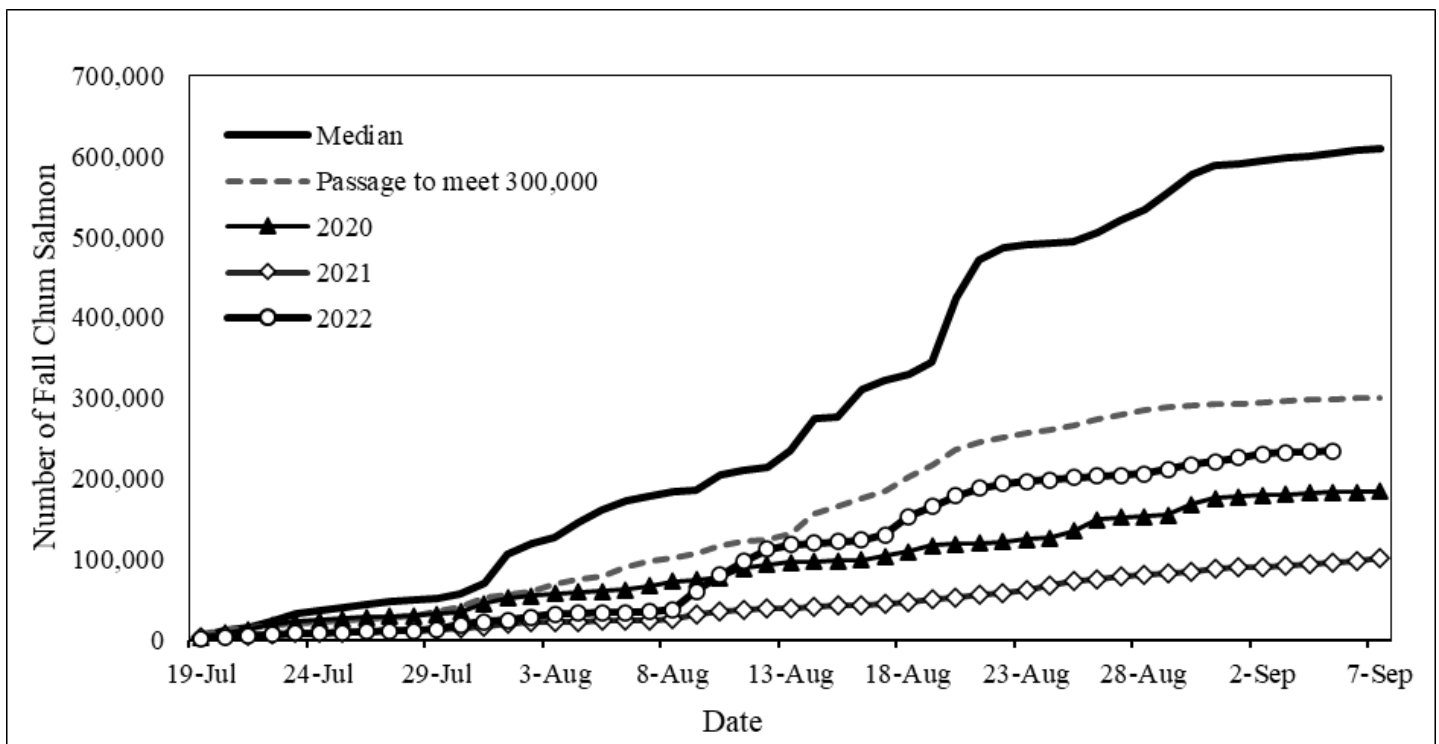


Figure 1. Cumulative passage of fall chum salmon at the mainstem Yukon River sonar project (Pilot Station) in 2022 compared to historical median, 2020, and 2021. The dashed line is the passage required to meet the minimum management requirement of 300,000 fish to allow subsistence fishing.

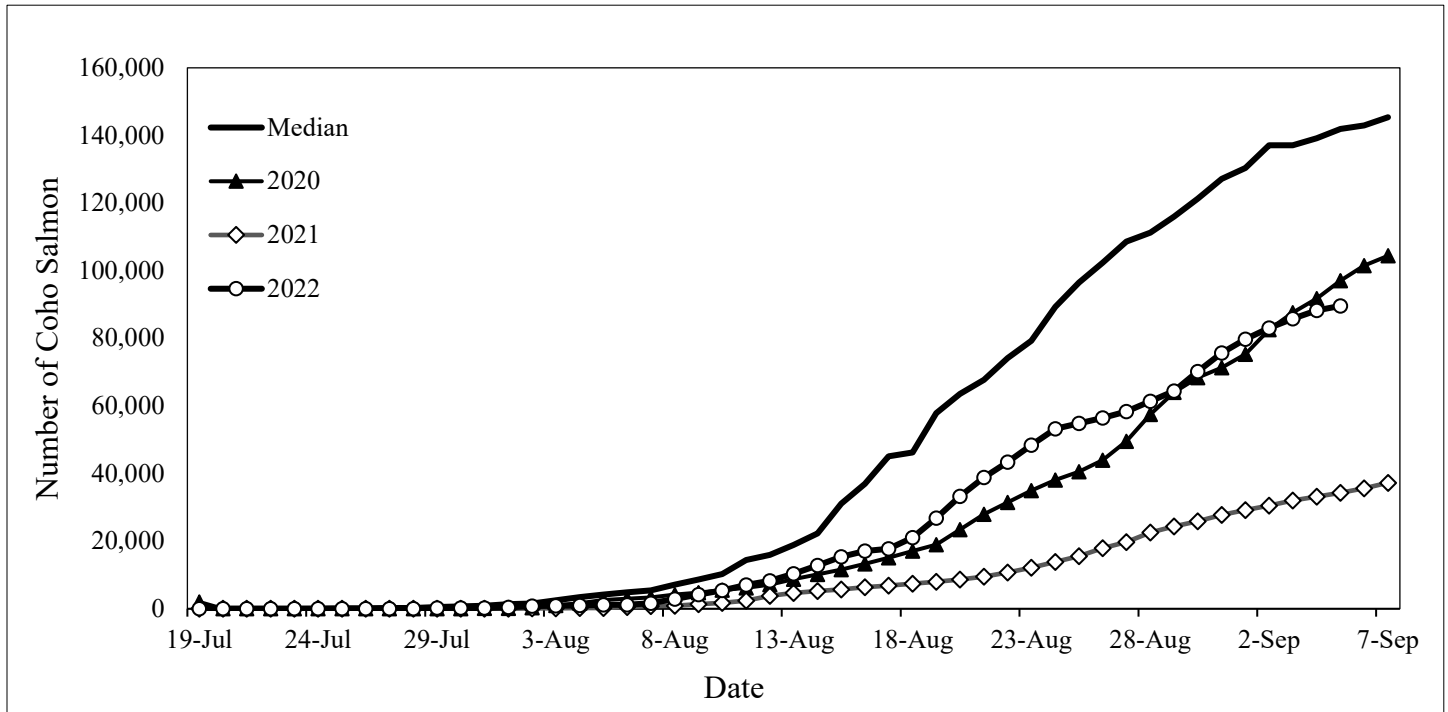


Figure 2. Cumulative passage of coho salmon at the mainstem Yukon River sonar project (Pilot Station) in 2022 compared to historical median, 2020, and 2021.

Teedriinjik (Chandalar) Sonar / USFWS

The sonar project began counting fish on August 8. As of September 5, the estimated cumulative passage of fall chum salmon was 13,988 fish, which was well below the median passage of 55,113 for this date. The first quarter point for this project is on September 5. The sustainable escapement goal for this system is 85,000 to 234,000 fall chum salmon.

Sheenjek River Sonar / ADF&G

The sonar project began operations on August 8. As of September 5, the estimated cumulative passage was 2,198 fall chum salmon, which was well below the median passage of 22,700 for this date. The first quarter point for this project is on September 6.

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

This project transitioned to counting fall chum salmon on August 22. The cumulative passage of fall chum salmon as of September 5 was 2,168, which was well below the average passage of 8,900 fish for this date. The first quarter point for this project is on September 16. The interim management escapement goal for the Yukon River Canadian mainstem stocks, as estimated by the sonar passage minus upstream harvest, is 70,000 to 104,000 fall chum salmon.

Porcupine River Sonar / Yukon Territory Canada / DFO

This project transitioned to counting fall chum salmon on August 7. The cumulative passage of fall chum salmon as of September 5 was 1,261 fish, which was well below the average passage of 7,900 fish for this date. The first quarter point for this project is also on September 5.

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

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

Fall Season Management Strategy

The 2022 fall chum salmon projection remains 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 through September. Subsistence salmon fishing is closed, except for the use of selective gear to target nonsalmon and salmon other than chum and Chinook salmon. Nonsalmon subsistence fishing gears remain open.

Stock Identification

Genetic mixed stock analysis on chum salmon for the last component of the run August 24 through September 7 will soon be headed to the lab and results will be reported the following week. As of August 23, the fall chum salmon run consists of 35% Border/US (Teedriinjik, Sheenjok, and Draanjik), 10% Canadian-origin, and 55% Tanana Fall stocks. On average more than 95% of the fish are fall chum salmon for the remainder of the run.

Age, Sex, and Length Composition

The age composition of 352 chum salmon sampled from the drift gillnets in the LYTF project through August 28, consisted of 78% age-4 and 21% age-5 fish, which compared to the 1983–2021 historical averages of 67% age-4 and 30% age-5. The percentage of female chum salmon through August 28 was 54% which is below the historical average (1986–2021) of 58%. The average length of 566 mm (n=359) is well below the historical average of 592 mm from 1981–2021. The percentage of female coho salmon through August 28 was 46% which is average (1986–2021) for this date. For coho salmon the average length of 546 mm (n=33) is well below the historical average of 575 mm from 1981–2021.

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 coho, pink, and sockeye salmon, while releasing Chinook and chum salmon alive from dip nets, hook and line (up to and including the Nulato River), and manned fish wheels. All Yukon River districts may also use hand line, longline, fyke net, dip net, beach seines, and spear for nonsalmon.

The USFWS Federal Inseason Manager has concurrently issued Emergency Special Actions 2-FC-01-22, 2-FC-02-22, 2-FC-03-22, 2-FC-04-22, and 2-FC-05-22 to close Federal public waters to the harvest of fall chum salmon in the Coastal District and districts 1–6. 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):

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):

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 may not have mesh in excess of 3-½ inches. If you are outside the permit area, contact the Fairbanks office at 907-459-7274 for a subsistence harvest calendar.

District 5 (including Tanana, Rampart, Stevens Village, Beaver, Venetie, Chalkyitsik, Birch Creek, Fort Yukon, Circle, and Eagle):

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 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.

A subsistence permit is also required to fish for all species in portions of District 5; 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); 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; and 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.

Subdistricts 6-A and 6-B (including the Kantishna River drainage, Lake Minchumina, Manley, Old Minto area, Minto, and Nenana) **and the Upper Tanana Area** (including the Delta Junction area, Dot Lake, Tanacross, Tetlin, Tok, Northway, and Nabesna):

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 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.

Legal gear types to take nonsalmon include 4-inch or smaller mesh gillnets 60 feet or shorter in length, handline, longline, fyke net, dip net, beach seine, and spear. Subsistence fishing for nonsalmon within Lake Minchumina and the Tolovana River drainage, including Minto Flats, is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 6-inch or smaller mesh gillnets.

Subsistence permits are required for salmon fishing in the Tanana River drainage up to the Wood River (Subdistrict 6-A, 6-B, and Kantishna River drainage); for northern pike fishing in the Tolovana River drainage, including Minto Flats; and for all species in the Upper Tanana Area. A subsistence salmon permit is not required in Lake Minchumina. 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/.

Personal Use Management Actions

Salmon Fishing

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

Personal Use salmon fishing remains closed.

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 remains closed. 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 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 or Delta Junction offices or online at 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 and shared on Facebook at www.facebook.com/subsistencealaska.

ADF&G Advisory Announcements will be posted on www.cfnews.adfg.alaska.gov/ and shared on Facebook at www.facebook.com/YukonRiverFishingADFG.

ADF&G subsistence fishing permits are available at www.adfg.alaska.gov/store

