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Advisory Announcement
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Prince William Sound Salmon Fishery Announcement #18

COPPER RIVER DISTRICT: The Copper River District will open at 7:00 am on Thursday, July 4 for a 48-hour commercial drift gillnet fishing period. Waters within the **standard Chinook salmon inside closure area** will be **CLOSED** during this fishing period. The trend in daily and cumulative passage at the Miles Lake sonar station indicates that the inriver goal is likely to be met and supports opening the Copper River District commercial fishery. Fishing effort is shifting from the Copper River District to other gillnet fisheries in Prince William Sound. Copper River District Chinook salmon average harvest timing (2014-2023) is 99% complete through this date. The continued closure of the standard Chinook salmon inside closure area is to help meet the escapement goal, and in response to Chinook salmon subsistence, personal use and sport harvest restrictions (no retention).

The **standard Chinook salmon inside closure area** will be defined as waters north of a line connecting the following points:

<i>Point</i>	<i>Latitude</i>	<i>Longitude</i>
Steamboat North	60° 22.87' N.	145° 33.50' W.
Steamboat South	60° 22.31' N.	145° 33.50' W.
West side Pete Dahl Entrance	60° 18.89' N.	145° 30.99' W.
West end Grass Island	60° 18.30' N.	145° 28.42' W.
East end Grass Island	60° 15.24' N.	145° 17.89' W.
West end Kokenhenik Bar	60° 15.00' N.	145° 16.20' W.
East end Kokenhenik Bar	60° 13.65' N.	145° 09.46' W.
Western tip of Softuk Bar	60° 13.68' N.	145° 05.78' W.
Coffee Creek West	60° 14.13' N.	144° 58.31' W.

The grass bank marker line is defined in 5 AAC 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, excluding the standard Chinook salmon inside closure area, will open to subsistence fishing from 6:00 am to 10:00 pm on all Saturdays from June 17 through October 28. **Subsistence fishing in the Copper River District is not allowed 24 hours before open commercial fishing periods.** Prince William Sound Management Area salmon subsistence permits may be obtained through any ADF&G office or online (<https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/Store/>). In Cordova, permits will be available during normal business hours Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. To assist with inseason harvest tracking, 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.

Cumulative sonar count through 7/2 is 559,603 fish whereas 475,976 fish are expected by this date based on historical run timing applied to the 2024 inriver goal. The daily count for 7/2 was 10,462 fish and the 0600 count for 7/3 was 3,199 fish. For the week ending June 29, the actual Copper River Delta survey count was 33,650 sockeye salmon versus an anticipated range 17,627 – 41,665. Preliminary harvest estimates from the 36-hour period that started on Monday, July 1 were 137 Chinook and 152,000 sockeye salmon with 400 deliveries reported.

BERING RIVER DISTRICT: The Bering River District will open to commercial salmon fishing, west of a longitude line at 144° 33.60' W., for a 48-hour period starting at 7:00 a.m. on Thursday, July 4. For the week ending June 29, the actual Bering River District survey count was 9,000 sockeye salmon versus an anticipated range 6,092 – 13,402. **Bering River sockeye salmon run timing overlap has increased and open area within the district will remain reduced until escapement indices support additional fishing area.**

COGHILL DISTRICT: The Coghill District, excluding the Granite Bay Subdistrict, the Esther Subdistrict, and the WNH THA and SHA, will open to commercial drift gillnet harvest for a 36-hour fishing period starting at 8:00 am on Thursday, July 4. **Waters of the Granite Bay Subdistrict, within Esther Pass east of a longitude line at 148° 02.94' W. and north of a latitude line at 60° 50.85' N, and within Granite Bay east of a line from 60° 54.00' N., 148° 06.33' W. to 60° 52.82' N., 148° 6.35' W. (Figure 1), will open to commercial drift gillnet harvest for a 12-hour fishing period starting at 8:00 am on Thursday, July 4. Anadromous stream closures within the open areas of the Granite Bay Subdistrict will not be in effect for the 12-hour 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 4. **Until further notice, regulatory closed waters pertaining to the Coghill River, as specified in 5 AAC 24.350(6)(B), will not be in effect during open commercial fishing periods. Commercial fishing will not be permitted within the bed or channel of the Coghill River at any stage of the tide.** The Coghill River weir cumulative sockeye salmon count through 7/2 is 32,457 fish compared to an escapement objective of 6,473–24,272 fish for this date. Preliminary harvest estimates from the 84-hour period that started on Thursday, June 27 were 11,600 chum and 17,200 sockeye salmon with 179 deliveries reported.

PWSAC recommends keeping the Esther and Granite Bay Subdistricts closed for maximum run-entry into the WNH SHA to achieve brood and cost recovery goals. PWSAC is approximately 12% complete on the 2024 chum revenue goal. PWSAC has suspended cost recovery due to insufficient run entry. Run entry and brood collection are evaluated daily in an effort to restart cost recovery. An estimated 70,000 fish of the 228,000 goal have been collected to date for fish available as brood.

ESHAMY DISTRICT: The Eshamy District, excluding the Main Bay Hatchery AGZ inside a line of buoys in front of the barrier seine, will open to commercial gillnet harvest for a **36-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Saturday, July 6.** The AGZ will open to **SET GILLNET** permit holders only during this fishing period. Preliminary harvest estimates from the 24-hour period that started on Monday, July 1 were 113,000 sockeye and 9,500 chum salmon with 423 deliveries reported.

PWSAC recommends keeping the Main Bay subdistrict closed through Friday, July 5, to maximize run-entry into the Main Bay SHA and achieve cost recovery goals. PWSAC also recommends keeping the remainder of the Eshamy District closed through Friday, July 5. PWSAC is 70% complete with the gillnet revenue goal. An estimated 8,375 fish of the 9,250 goal have been collected to date for fish available as brood.

UNAKWIK DISTRICT: The Unakwik District will open to commercial drift gillnet and purse seine harvest for a 36-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Thursday, July 4. No harvest was reported from the 36-hour period that started on Monday, July 1.

SEINE FISHERIES: VFDA cost recovery test fishing this past week has not produced enough fish to begin cost recovery; additional test fishing will occur in the coming days, and updates will be provided in subsequent announcements.

A partial aerial survey of the Eastern, Northwestern, and Coghill Districts was conducted on Tuesday, June 25, and the Eastern and Northern Districts were surveyed yesterday, June 28. Fish observations and stream indices from both surveys were minimal and below what is expected for this date. Based upon current indices of run entry and escapement, a fishery targeting wild stocks is not warranted at this time. The next aerial survey of the Eastern Northern, Coghill, and Northwestern Districts will occur this week.

MONTAGUE DISTRICT: As previously announced, the Port Chalmers Subdistrict, north of 60°12.56' N. lat. and east of 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 a 36-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Thursday, July 4, and for a 36-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Saturday, July 6. Regulatory closed waters and anadromous stream closures within the Port Chalmers Subdistrict will not be in effect until further notice. The estimated harvest for the 36-hour period ending on June 30 was 38,500 chum salmon, with 46 reported deliveries. A total of 920,000 chum salmon are forecast to return to Port Chalmers Subdistrict. Historical harvest timing for these chum salmon is from June 1 – July 27.

SOUTHWESTERN DISTRICT: As previously announced, the AFK THA and SHA will open to purse seine fishing for a 24-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Thursday, July 4, and for a 24-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Saturday, July 6. Anadromous stream closures within the AFK Hatchery THA and SHA will not be in effect until further notice. The estimated harvest for the 36-hour period ending on July 2 was 8,200 chum and 10,900 sockeye salmon, with 15 reported deliveries. A total of 240,000 chum salmon are forecast to return to AFK Hatchery. Historical harvest timing for these chum salmon is from June 1 – July 27.

The next scheduled salmon fisheries announcement is anticipated to be at 2:00 pm Saturday, July 6.

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 907-267-2843.

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).

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.

Figure 1.- Granite Bay Subdistrict lines for 12-hour fishing period on 7/4.

