



Advisory Announcement
For Immediate Release: July 10, 2024

CONTACT: Heather Scannell and Jeremy Botz
Finfish Area Management Biologist
(907) 424-3212

Prince William Sound Salmon Fishery Announcement #20

COPPER RIVER DISTRICT: The Copper River District will open at 7:00 am on Thursday, July 11, for a 48-hour commercial drift gillnet fishing period. Waters within the **standard Chinook salmon inside closure area** will be **OPEN** during this fishing period. Cumulative passage at the Miles Lake sonar station indicates that the inriver goal has been met and supports opening the Copper River District commercial fishery. Fishing effort is spread out between 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 opening of the standard Chinook salmon inside closure area is to help increase sockeye salmon harvest potential. A 60-hour fishing period is supported by current sockeye salmon abundance indices, however, the fishing period duration is being reduced by 12 hours to allow additional late-timed Chinook salmon through the commercial fishery.

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 will open to subsistence fishing from 6:00 am to 10:00 pm on all Saturdays from July 11 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 7/9 is 721,783 fish, whereas 510,010 fish are expected by this date based on historical run timing applied to the 2024 inriver goal. The daily count for 7/9 was 19,713 fish and the 0600 count for 7/10 was 4,596 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 60-hour period that started on Thursday, July 4, were 152,000 sockeye and 104 Chinook salmon, with 605 deliveries reported. The cumulative Copper River District harvest to date is 1.12 million sockeye, 8,700 Chinook, and 30,900 chum salmon.

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 11. 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 the open area within the district will remain reduced until escapement indices support additional fishing areas.** The cumulative Bering River District harvest to date is 32,700 sockeye salmon.

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 11. **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 11. 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 an 84-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Thursday, July 11. **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 7/9 is 47,561 fish compared to an escapement objective of 11,746–44,047 fish for this date. Preliminary harvest estimates from the 84-hour period that started on Thursday, July 4 were 38,900 chum and 12,700 sockeye salmon with 204 deliveries reported. The cumulative Coghill District commercial harvest to date is 69,200 sockeye and 169,000 chum salmon. As of 7/5, PWSAC estimated that they had secured or harvested a total of 333,000 chum salmon for cost recovery and broodstock at WNH.

ESHAMY DISTRICT: The Eshamy District, excluding the Main Bay Subdistrict, will open to commercial gillnet harvest for a 24-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Thursday, July 11. Preliminary harvest estimates from the 24-hour period that started on Monday, July 8 were 32,700 sockeye, 6,860 chum, and 6,630 pink salmon with 246 deliveries reported. The cumulative Eshamy District commercial harvest to date is 1.01 million sockeye, 58,800 chum, and 11,500 pink salmon. As of 7/5, PWSAC estimated that they had secured or harvested a total of 424,000 sockeye salmon for cost recovery and broodstock at MBH.

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 11.

SEINE FISHERIES: VFDA began its cost recovery sales program on Friday, July 5, and has collected approximately 10% of the assigned pink salmon revenue goal. Pink salmon cost recovery harvest from yesterday, July 9, resulted in an average weight of 3.4 pounds per fish and 12% female. VFDA cost recovery is continuing today.

An aerial survey of the Southeastern District was flown on Sunday, July 7, and the Eastern District was flown yesterday, July 9. Fish observations in some bays continue to improve, but districtwide observations and escapement trends remain 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, and future fishing opportunities will depend on VFDA cost recovery progress and wild stock escapement trends. Future aerial surveys of all districts are weather-dependent.

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 11, and a 36-hour period on Saturday, July 13. 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 July 7 was 33,500 chum salmon, with 45 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 11, and a 24-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Saturday, July 13. 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 9 was 10,400 chum, 5,900 pink, and 5,700 sockeye salmon, with 23 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.

COGHILL DISTRICT: The Coghill District, waters of College Fiord, north of a latitude line at 61°00.45'N. (Point Pakenham), will open to commercial purse seine harvest for an 84-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Thursday, July 11. **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 next scheduled salmon fisheries announcement is anticipated to be at 2:00 pm Saturday, July 13.

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.

Figure 1.- Granite Bay Subdistrict lines for 12-hour fishing period on 7/11.

