



## Advisory Announcement

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### Prince William Sound Salmon Fishery Announcement #23

**COPPER RIVER DISTRICT:** The Copper River District will open at 7:00 am on Thursday, July 18, for a 60-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 and other gillnet fisheries in Prince William Sound. Copper River District Chinook salmon average harvest timing (2014-2023) is 100% complete through this date. The opening of the standard Chinook salmon inside closure area is to help increase sockeye salmon harvest potential.

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.
<b>Little Softuk</b>	<b>60° 13.16' N.</b>	<b>144° 41.38' W.</b>

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 7/16 is 834,438 fish, whereas 551,661 fish are expected by this date based on historical run timing applied to the 2024 inriver goal. The daily count for 7/16 was 9,811 fish and the 0600 count for 7/17 was 3,248 fish. A partial survey of the Copper River Delta was flown under mixed observational conditions during the week ending July 13. New peak counts were observed in most index reaches flown. Preliminary harvest estimates from the 48-hour period that started on Thursday, July 11 were 53,400 sockeye and 18 Chinook salmon with 203 deliveries reported. The cumulative Copper River District harvest to date is 1.32 million sockeye, 8,820 Chinook, and 31,200 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 60-hour period starting at 7:00 a.m. on Thursday, July 18. No survey was flown during the week ending July 13 due to weather conditions. **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 57,400 sockeye salmon.

**COGHILL DISTRICT:** The Esther Subdistrict, excluding WNH THA and SHA and the area along the south shore of Esther Island inside of lines from 60° 47.30' N., 148° 00.60' W. to 60° 46.20' N., 148° 00.60' W. to 60° 46.20' N., 148° 07.50' W. to 60° 47.40' N., 148° 07.50' W (Figure 1), will open to commercial drift gillnet harvest for a 36-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Thursday, July 18. The Coghill District, excluding 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 18. 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 84-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Thursday, July 18. **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.**

Due to high water, the Coghill River weir has not been fish tight since 7/14. The cumulative sockeye salmon weir count through 7/13 was 63,514 fish compared to an escapement objective of 14,296–53,611 fish for this date. Preliminary harvest estimates from the 84-hour period that started on Thursday, July 11 were 21,800 chum and 7,800 sockeye salmon with 89 deliveries reported. The cumulative Coghill District commercial harvest to date is 85,700 sockeye and 210,000 chum salmon.

PWSAC recommends keeping the Esther subdistrict closed for maximum run-entry into the WNH SHA to achieve cost recovery goals. PWSAC is approximately 30% complete on the 2024 chum revenue goal. PWSAC plans cost recovery tomorrow with Silver Bay to harvest new run entry since their last cleanup on 7/15. The broodstock goal at WNH has been achieved. As of 7/17, PWSAC is 90% complete with the aggregate chum/sockeye salmon gillnet revenue goal.

**ESHAMY DISTRICT:** Wild sockeye, chum, and pink salmon run timing overlap is increasing and area is being reduced to provide for escapement in district streams and to allow for run entry to other districts. The Eshamy District **north of Loomis Creek (60° 29.44'N., 147° 58.42'W.),** will open to commercial gillnet harvest for a 36-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Thursday, July 18. The AGZ will open to **SET GILLNET** permit holders only during this fishing period.

The Eshamy River weir has passed 64 sockeye salmon through 7/16 with a cumulative target of 1,029–2,216 fish for the date. Preliminary harvest estimates from the 36-hour period that started on Monday, July 15 were 41,000 sockeye, 2,000 chum, and 11,000 pink salmon with 246 deliveries reported. The cumulative Eshamy District commercial harvest to date is 1.09 million sockeye, 65,000 chum, and 30,000 pink salmon.

PWSAC finished the initial sockeye revenue goal Monday 6/24. PWSAC initiated aggregate management and rebid sockeye to sell towards the gillnet (chum/sockeye) revenue goal. The 9,250 goal for brood was completed 7/6.

**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 18.

**SEINE FISHERIES:** Approximately 1.17 million fish were harvested in the Eastern District yesterday, July 16.

VFDA began its cost recovery sales program on Friday, July 5, and has collected approximately 79% of the assigned pink salmon revenue goal. The pink salmon cost recovery harvest from Monday, July 15, resulted in an average weight of 3.8 pounds per fish and 29% female. A pink salmon commercial harvest sample from the Jack Bay line yesterday, July 16, was 39% female. The next fishing period for VFDA pink salmon will depend on the completion of cost recovery and broodstock recruitment.

An aerial survey of the Coghill, Northwestern, and Eshamy Districts, is being flown today, and surveys of the remaining will occur as weather permits.

**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 18, and a 36-hour period on Saturday, July 20. 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 14 was 12,900 chum salmon, with 22 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 16-hour period starting at 6:00 am on Thursday, July 18, and a 16-hour period starting at 6:00 am on Saturday, July 20. Anadromous stream closures within the AFK Hatchery THA and SHA will not be in effect until further notice. The estimated harvest for the 16-hour period ending on July 15 was 4,200 pink, 580 chum, and 330 sockeye salmon, with 4 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 18. **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 seine fisheries announcement is anticipated to be at 5:00 pm Thursday, July 18. The next scheduled salmon gillnet fisheries announcement is anticipated to be at 2:00 pm Saturday, July 20.**

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.- Esther Subdistrict closure area.

