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Advisory Announcement

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2024 Yukon River Salmon Fall Fishery Announcement #4

Fall Update # 2, Yukon Area Salmon Fishery

Districts Affected: Yukon Area

The 2024 fall chum salmon preseason projection, based on the relationship between summer chum salmon and fall chum salmon run sizes, is for a run size of 377,000 fish. While the run projection is within the drainagewide escapement goal of 300,000–600,000 fall chum salmon, there is uncertainty in the current projection due to lower than expected abundance of age-4 summer chum salmon in this year's run, indicating lower production from the parent year. In recent years, the poorer than average Canadian component of the fall chum salmon run has meant that the Border objectives have not been met, even when the drainagewide escapement goal is anticipated to be met. Depending on the inseason abundance of Canadian stocks, the run may not be large enough to meet the Canadian treaty objectives for fall chum salmon, which are 70,000–104,000 fish in the mainstem Yukon River and 22,000–49,000 fish in the Fishing Branch River. As summer chum salmon comprise the majority of the early fall season salmon run, subsistence fishing for chum salmon has been allowed during the first ten days of the fall season in most districts. Subsistence fishing for chum salmon then closes until inseason estimates of abundance indicate a harvestable surplus of fall chum salmon is available.

Coho salmon typically enter the Yukon River in mid-August with the bulk of the run passing the Lower Yukon Test Fishery (LYTF) between August 16 and 26. The primary parent year for coho salmon this year is from the escapements in 2020. This year's coho run size is anticipated to be below average (average is 222,000 fish). Currently retention of coho salmon is allowed, but if inseason assessment of the run indicates abundance is very poor, restrictions later in the season could be announced.

Assessment project and management updates will be published in weekly Advisory Announcements (Updates) and shared during the weekly YRDFA teleconferences on Tuesdays at 1:00 p.m. (Alaska time). Call in number: 1-800-315-6338, Passcode: 98566# (YUKON#)

The ADF&G Emmonak office is open regular hours; Mondays to Fridays 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturdays 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. (closed Sundays). ADF&G Emmonak office: 1-907-949-1320.

Please call the toll-free hotline number if you have any questions about the fishing schedule or gear in your area: 1-866-479-7387. This hotline is updated after every announcement.

Fall Assessment Projects

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 July 28, the fall chum salmon cumulative CPUE was 74.66, which is below the average of 258.87 for this date. The first quarter point based on median run timing occurs on August 1 for fall chum salmon at this project.

Mountain Village Drift Test Fishing / Asacarsarmiut Tribal Council

Fall season operations began on July 18. As of July 28, the fall chum salmon cumulative CPUE was 106.12, which is below the average of 443.11 for that date. The first quarter point based on median run timing occurs on July 29 for fall chum salmon at this project.

Sonar Project near Pilot Station / ADF&G

The sonar project operated near Pilot Station transitioned to fall season counts on July 19. As of July 28, the cumulative passage is approximately 38,000 chum salmon. This compares to a median cumulative passage of 131,000 fall chum salmon for this date. The first quarter point based on median run timing occurs on July 30 for fall chum salmon at this project. The first coho salmon was caught on July 28 in the test fishery at this site.

Teedriinjik (Chandalar) Sonar / USFWS

This sonar project typically begins August 8 to count fall chum salmon.

Sheenjek River Sonar / ADF&G

This sonar project typically begins August 8 to count fall chum salmon.

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

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

Porcupine River Sonar / Yukon Territory Canada / DFO

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

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

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

Age, Sex, and Length Composition

The age composition of 39 chum salmon sampled from the drift gillnets in the LYTF project through July 24, consisted of 39% age-4 and 59% age-5 fish, which compared to the 2001–2023 historical averages of 59% age-4 and 40% age-5. The percentage of female chum salmon through July 27 was 49% which is near the 2001–2023 historical average of 51%. The average length of 568 mm is well below the 2001–2023 historical average of 582 mm through July 28.

Summer Season Assessment

The Chinook and summer chum salmon runs are complete in the lower river through District 2 and management has transitioned to fall season in the lower river districts. Assuming late run timing, the midpoint of the Chinook salmon run is projected to reach the sonar project located near Eagle on July 29 and the third quarter point August 3. The cumulative passage of Chinook salmon at Eagle sonar is well below average and only larger than what was observed in 2022 and 2023 on this date. Current projections indicate that the border passage goal of 71,000 will not be met. Passage of Chinook salmon at all U.S. assessment projects are well below average and escapement goals are unlikely to be met.

Preliminary estimates of the 2024 summer chum salmon run are above 758,000 fish, and the lower end of the drainagewide escapement goal of 500,000 to 1.2 million fish has been met. Summer chum salmon total run size and escapement will be estimated later this year after final assessment project and subsistence harvest estimates are available. One possible explanation for the lower than expected run size is the poor return of age-4 fish from the 2020 brood year.

Summer Assessment Projects

All assessment data is updated through July 28.

Chinook Radio Telemetry (ADF&G)

2024 was the second year of a three-year effort to capture and tag up to 500 Chinook salmon near Emmonak and track upriver migration to evaluate concerns for *en route* mortality. Tagging in the lower river concluded on July 12 with over 180 tags deployed but tracking operations are ongoing using remote tracking towers and aerial surveys within both Alaska and Canada. Each fish was tagged with both an internal radio telemetry tag and an external spaghetti tag. **If you encounter a tagged fish this season and are successful at documenting the tag number, please call 1-877-467-2104 to report information about when and where the fish was observed.** As a thank you for voluntarily reporting the tag number and associated information, you will be automatically entered into the ADF&G salmon tag lottery. More information about the project can be found on posters in communities along the river or at the ADF&G offices in Anchorage, Fairbanks and Emmonak. Please contact Josh Clark at 907-267-2217 or Fred West at 907-267-2237 with any questions.

Andreafsky Weir (USFWS)

Operations ended July 22. Project operations were hindered by high water and the weir was not fish tight for a portion of the season. An aerial survey of both the East and West Forks was conducted July 25. The count 70 Chinook and 1,265 summer chum salmon on the East Fork are only an index of passage and not a true census and should be considered a minimum estimate. These counts are slightly higher than what was observed inseason at the East fork weir but still well below the historical aerial survey average of 1,297 Chinook and 40,529 summer chum. The West Fork aerial survey count of 101 Chinook salmon and 2,596 was well below the historical average of 1,091 Chinook salmon and 47,414 summer chum salmon.

The final full day of counts was July 22, and the crew began to uninstall the weir a few days early on July 23 in anticipation of rising water levels. The cumulative passage is 24 Chinook salmon, which is below the cumulative average of 3,799 Chinook salmon, and 190 summer chum salmon, which is below the cumulative median of 57,592 summer chum salmon. Even accounting for a few missed days, final counts indicate that neither the Chinook escapement goal (2,100-4,900 fish) or the summer chum escapement goal (>40,000 fish) were met.

Anvik Sonar (ADFG)

Operations ended July 26. Cumulative passage was 99,648 summer chum salmon, which was below the median cumulative passage of 450,229 fish. The sonar was pulled between July 15 and July 18 due to high water. Counts at this project should be considered a minimum estimate.

Chena River Tower/Sonar (ADFG)

Counts began June 26. Rising water levels starting July 7 prevented visual counts and forced removal of the sonar. Counting with the sonar resumed starting July 17. Cumulative passage is 322 Chinook salmon, which is below the cumulative average of 4,764 fish, and 289 summer chum salmon, which is below the cumulative median of 2,378 fish. Counts should be considered a minimum estimate. Water levels rose again over this past weekend and both visual and sonar counts are no longer possible as of this morning. It's not clear when counts will resume.

Salcha River Tower/Sonar (ADFG)

Counts began June 27. Rising water levels starting July 6 prevented visual counts but the project was still able to operate using sonar. The sonar had to be removed from the water midday July 12 but was able to be redeployed prior to July 15 with visual counts starting July 16. Cumulative passage is 719 Chinook salmon, which is below the cumulative average of 6,809 fish, and 997 summer chum salmon, which is below the cumulative median of 4,050 fish. Counts should be considered a minimum estimate. Water levels rose again over this past weekend and both visual and sonar counts are no longer possible as of this morning. It's not clear when counts will resume.

Eagle Sonar (ADFG)

Counts began June 28. Cumulative passage is 10,736 Chinook salmon \pm 200 fish (90% Confidence Interval) which is below the cumulative average of 34,088 fish, on this date.

Summer Age, Sex, and Length Composition

The age composition of 173 Chinook salmon sampled from the drift gillnets in the Pilot Station Sonar test fishery through July 19 was 39% age-5, which compares to a historical average of 43%. The age-6 component made up 46% of the samples, which compares to a historical average of 46%. The remaining age classes in the sample were 2% age-3, 9% age-4 and 3% age-7 fish, which were all similar to historical averages. The percentage of females was similar to the recent 10-year average, based on evaluation of external body characteristics. Chinook salmon within each age class are smaller than the recent 10-year average, and the average length of 725 mm across all age classes is smaller than the recent 10-year average length of 732 mm.

Stock Identification

The third stratum of chum salmon genetic samples from the Pilot Station sonar test fishery (from July 8 through July 18) consisted of 96% summer chum salmon, of which, 73% were lower river stocks, 13% were bound for the middle Yukon River, and 14% were bound for the Tanana River. The lower summer stocks are average while the middle river stocks are lower than average and Tanana River components are above average for this time period.

Current Subsistence Management Actions

As a reminder, all gillnets must be marked with a buoy, float, or keg that has the fisherman's first initial, last name, and address. In Districts 3-6, submerged gillnets may be used for subsistence and personal use during ice-free months, however nets must have a visible buoy, keg, or cluster of floats attached to both ends of the net, plus a third in the middle if the net is over 60 feet in length.

Other legal gear types to take nonsalmon include hook and line with a rod or pole (excluding District 6), hand line, longline, fyke net, dip net, beach seine, and spear. If closures are in place for a salmon species, they must be released alive immediately from nonsalmon gear (other than 4-inch or smaller mesh gillnets).

Coastal District, District 1, and District 2 (from the Naskonat Peninsula to Point Romanof, including the Black River and communities of Chevak, Hooper Bay, Scammon Bay, Emmonak, Nunam Iqua, Alakanuk, Kotlik, Mountain Village, Pitkas Point, St. Mary's, Pilot Station, and Marshall):

Fishing with selective gear types (dip nets, beach seines, manned fish wheels, and hook and line gear) is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week, for pink, coho, and sockeye salmon. Chinook and chum salmon must be released alive.

Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon and are restricted to 60-feet or less in length and must be operated as a set net. Nets should be set near shore.

District 3 and the Innoko River (including Russian Mission, Holy Cross, and Shageluk):

Fishing with selective gear types (dip nets, beach seines, manned fish wheels, and hook and line gear) is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week for summer chum, pink, coho, and sockeye salmon. Chinook salmon must be released alive.

Effective 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, July 31, Chinook and chum salmon must be released alive from selective gear.

Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon and are restricted to 60-feet or less in length and must be operated as a set net. Nets should be set near shore.

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

Fishing for summer chum salmon is open with selective gear 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. Dip nets, beach seines, manned fish wheels, and hook and line gear may be used for nonsalmon and pink, sockeye, coho, and chum salmon. Chinook salmon must be released alive.

Effective at the date and times listed below, chum salmon subsistence fishing will close. Dip nets, beach seines, manned fish wheels, and hook and line gear may be used for nonsalmon and pink, sockeye, and coho salmon. Chinook and chum salmon must be released alive.

- **12:01 a.m. on Saturday, August 3**, Subdistrict 4-A Lower (Anvik and Grayling) including the Anvik River
- **12:01 a.m. on Wednesday, August 7**, Subdistrict 4-A Upper and Koyukuk River drainage (Kaltag, Nulato, Koyukuk, Huslia, Hughes, Alatna, Allakaket, Bettles, Wiseman, and Coldfoot)
- **12:01 a.m. on Friday, August 9**, Subdistricts 4-B and 4-C (Galena and Ruby)

Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon and are restricted to 60-feet or less in length and must be operated as a set net. Nets should be set near shore.

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, and Coldfoot. Gillnet gear in this permit area may only be used from August 20 to June 30 and must be 3½ inches or smaller mesh size.

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

Fishing with selective gear types (dip nets, beach seines, manned fish wheels, and hook and line gear) is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week, for summer chum, pink, and sockeye salmon. Chinook salmon must be released alive.

Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon and are restricted to 60-feet or less in length and must be operated as a set net. Nets should be set near shore.

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

Subdistrict 5-D (from an ADF&G regulatory marker two miles downstream of Waldron Creek upstream to the U.S./Canada border and all other adjacent tributaries, including the communities of Stevens Village, Beaver, Venetie, Chalkyitsik, Birch Creek, Fort Yukon, Circle, and Eagle):

As previously announced, salmon fishing is closed. Fish wheels and gillnets larger than 4-inch are not allowed. Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon and are restricted to 60-feet or less in length and must be operated as a set net. Nets should be set near shore.

A subsistence permit is 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 and for all species from the upstream mouth of 22 Mile Slough to the U.S./Canada border.

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):

Fishing with selective gear types (dip nets, beach seines, and manned fish wheels) is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week until further notice for summer chum, pink, and sockeye salmon. Chinook salmon must be released alive.

Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon and are restricted to 60-feet or less in length and must be operated as a set net. Nets should be set near shore.

In Lake Minchumina subsistence fishing for nonsalmon will remain 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):

Fishing with selective gear types (dip nets, beach seines, and manned fish wheels) is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week until further notice for summer chum, pink, and sockeye salmon. Chinook salmon must be released alive.

Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon and are restricted to 60-feet or less in length and must be operated as a set net. Nets should be set near shore.

In the Tolovana River drainage, including Minto Flats, subsistence fishing for nonsalmon will remain open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 6-inch or smaller mesh gillnets. 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):

As previously announced, salmon fishing is closed and fish wheels and gillnets larger than 4-inch are not allowed. Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon and are restricted to 60-feet or less in length and must be operated as a set net. Nets should be set near shore.

Effective 8 p.m. Tuesday, July 30, fishing with selective gear types (dip nets, beach seines, and manned fish wheels) is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week until further notice for summer chum, pink, and sockeye salmon. Chinook salmon must be released alive.

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

Personal Use Management Actions

Subdistrict 6-C (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):

By regulation, Personal Use fishing is open with dip nets and live release fish wheels only on the regulatory schedule of two 42-hour periods per week from:

6 p.m. Fridays to 12 p.m. noon Sundays

6 p.m. Mondays to 12 p.m. noon Wednesdays

All Chinook salmon must be released alive immediately. Fish wheels must be closely attended.

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):

Subject to permit stipulations, Personal Use whitefish and sucker fishing with fish wheels and gillnets is open and gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh, 60 feet or less in length, may be used. Fishing with other gear for whitefish and suckers in this area remains open 7 days per week, 24 hours per day.

A reminder to personal use fishermen that a personal use salmon permit is required to fish for salmon in Subdistrict 6-C and a personal use whitefish and sucker permit is required to fish for these species in the Fairbanks Nonsubsistence Area. Both permits require a valid sport fishing license. 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/.

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. The USFWS Federal Inseason Manager has previously issued separate Federal special actions with the same fishing schedule and gear restrictions, that restricts fishing to federally qualified subsistence users in waters adjacent to Federal Land. To reach the USFWS Yukon River Subsistence Fishery Manager, call Holly Carroll at 907-351-3029.



This is an announcement by the ADF&G and the USFWS. Federal Special Actions will be posted on www.doi.gov/subsistence/fisheries-special-actions.

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

