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Advisory Announcement

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2024 Yukon River Salmon Fall Fishery Announcement #6

Fall Update # 3, 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. There was a two-day storm in the lower river that did not allow for test fishing. Through August 2, the fall chum salmon cumulative CPUE was 269.23, which is below the median of 405.76 for this date. The first quarter point based on median run timing occurs on August 1 for fall chum salmon at this project. The first coho salmon was also caught on August 2.

Mountain Village Drift Test Fishing / Asacarsarmiut Tribal Council

Fall season operations began on July 18. As of August 3, the fall chum salmon cumulative CPUE was 489.42, which is below the median of 667.03 for that date. The mid-point based on median run timing occurs on August 10 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 August 4, the cumulative passage is approximately 87,000 chum salmon. This compares to a median cumulative passage of 216,000 fall chum salmon for this date. The mid-point based on median run timing occurs on August 10 for fall chum salmon at this project. The coho salmon run is just beginning, the cumulative passage as of August 4 is approximately 550 fish, which is below the median passage of 2,600 fish for this date.

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 223 chum salmon sampled from the drift gillnets in the LYTF project through August 2, consisted of 43% age-4 and 52% age-5 fish, which compared to the 2001–2023 historical averages of 61% age-4 and 38% age-5. The percentage of female chum salmon through August 4 was 45% which is below the 2001–2023 historical average of 54%. The average length of 572 mm is well below the 2001–2023 historical average of 583 mm through August 2.

Stock Identification

Since July 19 due to low fish passage not enough samples have been collected so far to send in for genetic analysis. We expect to send the first batch of fall season chum salmon samples to the lab later this week. When results are available, they will be provided in the following weekly advisory announcement or look for them in the ADF&G Yukon River daily update for those who subscribe: <http://list.state.ak.us/mailman/listinfo/yukonriverdailyupdate>.

Summer Season Assessment

The Chinook and summer chum salmon runs are complete through District 4-A Lower and management has transitioned to fall season. Assuming late run timing, the third quarter point of the Chinook salmon run passed Eagle Sonar on 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.

Summer Assessment Projects

All assessment data is updated through August 4.

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.

Chena River Tower/Sonar (ADFG)

Operations ended early on July 28 because of rising water levels. Cumulative passage was 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.

Salcha River Tower/Sonar (ADFG)

Operations ended early on July 28 because of rising water levels. Cumulative passage was 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.

Eagle Sonar (ADFG)

Counts began June 28. Cumulative passage is 17,319 Chinook salmon \pm 259 fish (90% Confidence Interval) which is below the cumulative average of 44,329 fish, on this date.

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 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.

Subdistrict 4-A Lower (from $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile downstream from Old Paradise Village upstream to Stink Creek, including Grayling and Anvik):

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.

Subdistrict 4-A Upper and the Koyukuk River Drainage (from Stink Creek upstream to the tip of Cone Point, including Kaltag, Nulato, Koyukuk, Huslia, Hughes, Allakaket, Alatna, Bettles, Wiseman, and Coldfoot):

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.

Effective 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, August 7, 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.

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 $\frac{3}{2}$ inches or smaller mesh size.

Subdistricts 4-B and 4-C (including Galena and Ruby)

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.

Effective 12:01 a.m. Friday, August 9, 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.

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.

Effective 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, August 14, 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.

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):

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):

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.

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):

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.

