



July 1, 2024

Initial DRAFT Spend Plan for funds appropriated to address the 2022 Kuskokwim Management Area salmon fishery disaster determination. NOAA Fisheries has allocated \$331,920 for this salmon fishery disaster. The spend plan informs the federal grant application submitted by Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (PSMFC) to NOAA Fisheries and is subject to change based on approval of the final grant.

Written comments are requested on all elements of the proposed spend plan and should be as specific as possible. Comments will be posted as received online and therefore, ADF&G requests that no business proprietary information, copyrighted information, or personally identifiable information be included in written comments. Comments can be submitted by email to:

dfg.com.fisheriesdisasters@alaska.gov or by mail to: ADF&G, Attn: Darion Jones
PO Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

Comments must be sent by July 14, 2024, for consideration in the next iteration of the spend plan. A second draft of the spend plan will be available for public comment before the spend plan is finalized.

Guiding principles for disaster fund distribution: Disbursement of funds is intended to 1) assist fishery participants harmed by the 2022 Kuskokwim Management Area salmon fishery disaster and 2) improve fishery information used to assess and forecast future fishery performance and to develop management approaches that avoid and/or mitigate the impacts of future fishery disasters that cannot be prevented.

The proposed categories and allocations reflect comments received on the 2021 Kuskokwim River salmon disaster spend plan.

Category	Allocation	Estimated funds ^a
Research	9.8%	\$32,500
Commercial and subsistence participants	89.9%	\$295,185
Program support	<0.2%	\$500
Total		\$328,185

^a Additional funds will be allocated to Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission to administer the federal grant

The impact of the fishery disaster created significant loss of income to those involved in the harvesting and processing sectors and to the communities in which the cultural and basic economic structure is the marine economy. A portion of these funds will be allocated to research activities that promote restoration of the fishery or prevent a similar failure in the future, but they will also be used to help assist the fishing communities that were affected by this fishery resource disaster by recognizing the loss

of incomes and loss of salmon resources needed for food security. These direct payments will compensate participants consistent with fishery investments and/or historical fishery performance. Historically one of the purposes of disaster funding was to get funds to communities and fishermen as fast as possible. Direct payments provide that method.

Research ~10% (\$32,500): Research funds are intended to support projects that improve available fishery information and help prevent and/or mitigate future fishery disasters. The scope of this fishery disaster is the Kuskokwim Management Area and includes Chinook, chum, and coho salmon.

The following research themes have been suggested as priorities for funding in previous spend plans by ADF&G staff and public comment:

- Improvement of the Kuskokwim Area and broader Western Alaska coho genetic baseline using sample collection at spawning locations.
- Tatlawiksuk River weir telemetry project to improve total abundance estimates of Kuskokwim River drainage chum salmon.
- Improve research and assessment of the biological impacts of Ichthyophonus disease on adult run abundance and in-river mortality.

ADF&G is requesting input on this or other suggested research themes. In addition, recent Alaska disaster spend plans have used competitive and non-competitive bid processes to award research funds. If a non-competitive process is used, research projects that are responsive to the research themes would be described directly in the spend plan. ADF&G is requesting input on the appropriate award process for this fishery disaster spend plan.

Community: ADF&G does not propose a community directed allocation. Kuskokwim Management Area salmon landings primarily occurred at a floating processor vessel rather than shore-based facilities. Fish ticket data does not show a significant decline in salmon landings to any municipality or borough due to the 2022 fishery disaster. ADF&G proposes allocating funds to commercial and subsistence participants who were greatly impacted by the 2022 salmon fishery disaster and is requesting input on this or other suggestions.

Commercial and subsistence participants ~90% (\$295,185): This category includes commercial harvesters, crew, and processors in the Kuskokwim Management Area. It also includes subsistence households that rely on subsistence salmon fisheries in the Kuskokwim Management Area.

ADF&G is proposing to allocate commercial and subsistence harvester funds proportional to estimated losses. The estimated commercial fishery loss due to the fishery disaster was calculated by subtracting the gross revenue value of all salmon in the disaster year, 2022, from the previous five-year average annual gross revenue value for all salmon from 2015 through 2019, which excludes the 2020 and 2021 disaster years.

ADF&G estimated subsistence fishery losses by subtracting the total estimated pounds of all salmon in the disaster year from the 2015 through 2019 annual average, for each salmon species. Revenue losses for subsistence salmon were based on an average of urban and rural replacement costs for each species of salmon.

Fishery	Estimated loss due to fishery disaster	Proportion of total loss	Proposed allocation
2022 Kuskokwim commercial	-\$140,568	5.4%	\$15,868
2022 Kuskokwim subsistence	-\$2,474,353	94.6%	\$279,317
Total	-\$2,614,921	100%	\$295,185

Subsistence Participants (~\$279,317): ADF&G proposes that subsistence households in the Kuskokwim Management Area would be eligible for direct payments based on the number of shares they qualify for, and the total proposed allocation.

ADF&G proposes using eligibility criteria for subsistence households based on criteria that were developed for Section 12005 CARES Act Fisheries Assistance. To receive fishery disaster assistance, one household member would apply for the household. Eligible applicants would be placed into tiers based on household size in 2022. Smaller households with 1-3 members would be eligible for one share, households with 4-6 members would be eligible for two shares, and households with seven or more members would be eligible for three shares.

Household size	Number of Shares
1-3	1
4-6	2
7+	3

Once all applications have been received, the total number of shares would be determined and payments for applicants calculated accordingly.

Proposed subsistence household eligibility requirements:

1. All eligible household members **MUST** be Alaskan residents meeting at least one of the following criteria:
 - a) Eligible to receive an Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend for calendar year 2022.
 - b) Possessed or eligible to receive a 2022 Alaska resident sport fishing license from the Department of Fish and Game.
 - c) Registered as a resident during 2022 with the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC).
 - d) Held a subsistence or personal use permit issued by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in 2022 in the Kuskokwim Area as defined at 5 AAC 01.250. Personal use fishery permits are **NOT** eligible for relief under this spend plan. They may **ONLY** be used to prove residency.
2. Applicant for household **MUST** be at least 18 years old to apply per federal requirements.
3. **MUST** self-certify that they are not de-barred from receiving federal funds and are not on the federal government “do not pay list”.
4. Eligibility will be determined by Alaskan household.
 - A household is defined as a person or persons having the same permanent residence.
 - Alaskan households that participate in subsistence salmon fisheries on the Kuskokwim River may apply regardless of physical household address.
 - Only one application may be submitted per household.
5. **MUST** self-certify that one or more members of the household participated in a salmon subsistence fishery in at least two of the previous four years when the fishery was open (2017-2020) in the Kuskokwim Management Area.

- Participation includes harvesting, sharing, and/or using salmon subsistence fishery resources. Subsistence harvest does NOT require the use of a sport fishing license.
 - Subsistence fisheries are defined as fisheries on salmon stocks for which the Alaska Board of Fisheries has found there are positive customary and traditional uses, in addition to federal subsistence fisheries that have no state equivalent.
6. Eligible applicants MUST self-certify that their household has incurred a negative impact on their ability to access subsistence salmon fishery resources in 2022 that was directly or indirectly related to the fishery disaster.

Commercial participants (~\$15,868):

2022 Kuskokwim Commercial	Allocation	Estimated funds
Harvesters	90%	\$14,281
Processors	10%	\$1,587
Total		\$15,868

Total losses are confidential because there are fewer than three processing companies.

Kuskokwim permit holders – 90%

Proposed eligibility criteria for permit holders:

1. S04W permit holder must have made a salmon landing in 2021.
2. Permit holder must have had a valid S04W permit in 2022. A permit is considered valid if fees are paid to renew the permit in 2022.

Funds are proposed to be paid to the person listed as the 2022 ‘Permit holder’ and temporary emergency transfer permit holders (transferees) in the CFEC database. Permit holders who certified they were unable to participate in 2022 in order to qualify for an emergency transfer or permit holders who permanently transferred a permit away before the 2022 salmon season will not receive payments. Based on the proposed criteria, ADF&G estimates nineteen permit holders are eligible for equal payment.

Processors – 10% of commercial allocation (~\$1,587): Kuskokwim area salmon processing companies meeting the criteria are eligible for direct payment based on the Commercial Operator’s Annual Reports (COAR) buying data. COAR buying data are used to determine eligibility and payment for processors because those data are linked to the salmon harvesting location.

Proposed processor eligibility criterion:

- Processing company must have processed Kuskokwim area salmon in 2021.

Based on the proposed criterion, ADF&G estimates one processing company is eligible for payment.

Program Support ~ 0.15% (\$500): ADF&G is proposing to designate funds for staff working on fishery disaster plan development and implementation in coordination with Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission.