

**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES
NEWS RELEASE**



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UPCOMING SOUTHERN NORTON SOUND SUBSISTENCE FISHING CLOSURES

The department expects a weak king salmon run in Norton Sound in 2019. Because of the expected poor run the department will close the Unalakleet River to net fishing beginning June 15.

Effective the evening of June 14 at midnight the Unalakleet River drainage from downstream of the North River and the North River drainage will close to all subsistence net fishing, except for dip nets and cast nets. Any king salmon caught in a dip net or cast net must be immediately returned to the water. The subsistence net fishing closure will extend out to the marine waters within 500 yards of the Unalakleet River mouth. Set gillnets with a mesh size of 4 inches or less are allowed to be fished in the Unalakleet River drainage upstream of the North River only.

Likewise, the marine waters of southern Norton Sound from Bald Head (near Elim) south to Wood Point (near St. Michael) will close to subsistence salmon fishing on June 15. And except the Koyuk River, subsistence salmon fishing in all fresh waters from Bald Head to Black Point will close on June 15.

Also, on June 15, the subsistence fishing schedule for Subdistrict 4, the Norton Bay Subdistrict, and the Inglutalik and Ungalik rivers goes into effect for the remainder of June unless changed by emergency order. The Subdistrict 4 schedule will be from 6:00 a.m. Saturdays to 6 p.m. Sundays and from 6 a.m. Mondays to 6 p.m. Tuesdays. During the openings from Mondays to Tuesdays, subsistence users will be restricted to set gillnets with a stretched mesh size of 6 inches or smaller. For the weekend openings from Saturdays to Sundays, there will be no restrictions on mesh size. The Koyuk River is not affected by this action and will remain open 7 days a week.

For Subdistricts 5 and 6, the Shaktoolik and Unalakleet Subdistricts, the department will set one subsistence fishing period each week in the marine waters with gillnets restricted to a mesh size 6 inches or less during favorable weather conditions. If the king salmon run is stronger than expected the department will increase fishing time as warranted and specific strategies will vary for each subdistrict depending on expected fishing effort and recent harvest patterns.

For any questions regarding this news release please call Fish & Game in Nome at 443-5167 or 1-800-560-2271.