

Division of Sport Fish

David Rutz, Director

Anchorage Headquarters Office
333 Raspberry Road
Anchorage, AK 99518



Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Douglas Vincent-Lang, Commissioner

P.O. Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526
www.adfg.alaska.gov

Advisory Announcement

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Contact: [Mark Somerville](#)
Area Management Biologist
(907) 822-3309

COPPER RIVER PERSONAL USE DIP NET SALMON FISHING SCHEDULE:

WEEK OF JULY 6 – 12

The Chitina Subdistrict will open for 84 hours during the week of July 6 – 12 from 12 noon Thursday, July 9 through 11:59 p.m. Sunday, July 12. The Chitina Subdistrict Personal Use Dip Net Salmon Fishery **remains closed to the retention of king salmon**. King salmon incidentally taken must be released immediately and returned to the water unharmed.

The 2020 Copper River sockeye salmon run is currently 80% of the inriver sonar objective for this date. The department is reducing the personal use fishing opening by 36 hours from the normal schedule to compensate for the weak sockeye salmon wild stock abundance. The personal use fishery will continue to be managed weekly through the end of August with any potential fishing opportunity dependent upon sonar passage and further adjustments needed to ensure wild sockeye salmon escapement.

As a reminder, the *Copper River Personal Use Dip Net Salmon Fishery Management Plan* and the Statewide Personal Use Fishing Regulations state that:

- The annual limit is 25 salmon for the head of household and 10 salmon for each dependent of the permit holder.
- Personal use fishers must possess **both** their Chitina Personal Use fishery permit and a valid resident sport fishing license when fishing. **Steelhead and king salmon cannot be kept,** and must be returned to the water unharmed.
- You must record your harvest on the permit **immediately.**
- The tips of the tail of personal use caught fish must be clipped **immediately** upon landing a fish.
- **Immediately** is defined as before concealing the salmon from plain view or transporting the salmon from the fishing site. **Fishing site** means the location where the fish was removed from the water and became part of the permit holder's bag limit.

The Copper River personal use fishery is managed under direction of the Copper River Personal Use Dip Net Salmon Fishery Management Plan (5 AAC 77.591). The plan establishes the season from June 7 through September 30 and directs the department to establish weekly periods based on Miles Lake sonar counts. During June 22 – 28, there were 55,140 salmon counted past the Miles Lake sonar. The preseason projection for this period was 52,301 salmon, which results in a weekly surplus of 2,839 salmon. This associated level of sonar passage would normally allow for 120 hours of fishing time during the week of July 6 – 12, an increase of 5 hours from the preseason schedule. However, commercial harvest of sockeye salmon in the Copper River District is 89%

below average, with only five 12-hr commercial fishing periods this season through June 30, compared to 14 fishing periods of 12 – 48 hrs during a normal season. In addition, total salmon passage by the Miles Lake sonar is 20% below the inriver goal objective for this date. As of June 28, a total of 366,730 salmon have been counted past the Miles Lake sonar compared to a preseason projection of 445,904 salmon for this date, which results in a deficit of 79,174 salmon. Due to overall low sockeye salmon passage and concerns of achieving the sockeye salmon escapement goal, a reduction of 36 hours from the normally calculated fishing time is warranted. This reduction in fishing time is intended to spread harvest and provide fishing opportunity throughout the run while taking a conservative management approach.

Additionally, ADF&G is notifying fishery users that all 2020 Chitina Personal Use Salmon Fishery participation and harvest reporting must be completed online through the [ADF&G Harvest Reporting website](#). Online reporting will be required regardless if you purchased the permit through the ADF&G online store or through a vendor. Returning permits by mail or hand-delivery will no longer be an acceptable means to report. Also, the penalty for failure to report Chitina Personal Use Salmon Fishery harvest online by the October 15 reporting deadline will be the loss of future personal use fishing privileges, and **permit holders who fail to report will be denied a permit for the fishery the next calendar year.**

All residents of Alaska qualify to participate in this personal use fishery. You must have a Chitina Personal Use Salmon Fishery Permit and a resident Alaska sport fishing license when dipnetting. Both dip net permits and fishing licenses can be obtained online at <https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/Store/>. A \$15 fee is charged for the Chitina Subdistrict personal use salmon fishery permit. Revenue from the fee supports the sanitation services at the fishery and trail maintenance from O'Brien Creek to Haley Creek.

The department urges dipnetters to respect the rights of private landowners in the area and familiarize themselves with the land ownership in the area before fishing. For information on access across private lands contact Chitina Native Corporation at (907) 823-2223 (<https://chitinanative.com/obrien-creek-permit-program>) or Ahtna, Inc at (907) 822-3476 (<https://www.ahtna-inc.com/lands/>).

Information regarding the fishery can be found at the ADF&G web site: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=PersonalUsebyAreaInteriorChitina.main>. This site provides information regarding the Upper Copper River fisheries including: fishery descriptions and summaries, maps of the subdistricts, a listing of vendors that carry the permits, and links to the sonar numbers and fishing schedule emergency orders.

The current fishing schedule will be announced on the Chitina Fishery information line at 822-5224 (Glennallen), 459-7382 (Fairbanks), and 267-2511 (Anchorage). Please contact an information phone line prior to planning your trip to Chitina to ensure that the fishery will be open when you arrive. If you have any questions regarding the Chitina Subdistrict personal use fishery, please contact the ADF&G office in Glennallen at (907) 822-3309.

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