

Division of Commercial Fisheries
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Advisory Announcement

For Immediate Release: August 6, 2020

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Kotzebue Commercial Fishery Announcement #7

KOTZEBUE COMMERCIAL SALMON FISHING TO OPEN ON FRIDAY

Commercial salmon fishing will be open for 8 hours on Friday, August 7, from 12 noon until 8 p.m. in the Kotzebue District.

The commercial catch in Wednesday's opening was 6,129 chum salmon with 45 permit holders fishing. The catch dropped from Monday's catch of nearly 9,000 chum salmon and last Friday's catch of nearly 7,500 chum salmon. The catch per unit of effort (CPUE) for those two previous periods was nearly 27 and dropped to 17 on Wednesday. Therefore, the average catch per permit holder dropped by 10 chum salmon per hour compared to the two previous fishing periods.

The Kobuk River test fish chum salmon catch index at Kiana has started to increase but remains the lowest in the 28-year project history. Test net catches are expected to improve this week because of the reduced commercial fishing time. If the Kobuk River chum salmon catch index continues to improve as expected the department will allow increased commercial fishing time next week.

The department does expect commercial catches to improve into next week based on run timing models of recent years and should slow the second half of August. However, if the chum salmon run falls off early the department will need to continue with limited commercial fishing time to allow sufficient chum salmon passage through the commercial fishing district for upriver subsistence needs and escapement.

If you have any questions concerning the fishery you can call the Kotzebue office at 442-3420, or the Commercial Fisheries office in Nome at 1-800-560-2271.

COVID-19

Under Alaska's Health Mandates 10, 17, and 18, commercial fishing is an Essential Business and is part of Alaska's Essential Services and Critical Infrastructure. Commercial fishermen should ensure that all travel and other activities in support of commercial fishing operations follow protocols in Alaska COVID-19 Health Mandates. COVID-19 Health Mandates may be found here: <https://gov.alaska.gov/home/covid19-healthmandates/>