



Advisory Announcement

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2021 Yukon River Salmon Summer Fishery Announcement #5

Summer Update # 1, Yukon Area Salmon Fishery

Districts Affected: Yukon Area

The 2021 Chinook salmon run size is forecasted to be smaller than the 2020 run and may not be strong enough to meet escapement objectives. When run forecasts are this weak, regulations require that salmon fishing be closed on the first pulse. In accordance with the preseason management strategy to take a conservative approach this season, subsistence fishing will be closed during the trickle and first pulse of the Chinook salmon run. This is intended to protect Chinook salmon while more information about the timing and strength of the run is collected. Closures in each district are based on average swim speeds.

The first Chinook salmon was caught in the Pilot Station Test fishery on May 31. The first summer chum salmon was caught in the Lower Yukon Test Fish (LYTF) project on May 30. Early Chinook salmon may be as far upriver as Kaltag.

At this time, few summer chum salmon have entered the Yukon River. Selective gear openings will be considered when summer chum salmon are more abundant.

The inseason salmon management teleconferences hosted by the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association are held every Tuesday, at 1:00 p.m. To participate, call (800) 315-6338, and enter code: YUKON# (98566#).

Assessment Projects

Lower Yukon Test Fishery (LYTF)/ ADF&G and YDFDA

Operations for 2021 have been altered. The Middle Mouth set gillnet site is not being operated to reduce Chinook salmon mortalities, but drift gillnet operations using 8.25-inch mesh have been added to obtain Chinook salmon CPUE data from that location. In the South Mouth at Big Eddy, set gillnet operations for Chinook salmon and drift gillnet operations for summer chum and Chinook salmon are unchanged. The Big Eddy Chinook salmon drift CPUE values can be compared to historical averages but the set net data from Big Eddy should not be compared to historical data because it does not include any Middle Mouth set net data this season.

The Big Eddy Chinook salmon set gillnet site began operations on June 3 and the cumulative CPUE is 4.88. This year's CPUE values are not directly comparable to historical CPUEs but should still give an indication of large groups of fish entering the river. Large catches of Chinook salmon were seen on June 5 and 6 and may indicate the start of a pulse entering the river. Fishing conditions at this site have been favorable, with little to no debris.

Chinook salmon drift gillnet sites at Big Eddy and Middle Mouth were operational on May 22 and June 5, respectively. The Big Eddy cumulative Chinook salmon catch per unit effort (CPUE) in the 8.25-inch drift gillnet is 27.71, which is above the historic average of 20.98. No Chinook salmon have been caught to date in the Middle Mouth 8.25-inch drifts.

Summer chum drift gillnet sites at Big Eddy and Middle Mouth were operational on May 25 and June 5, respectively. The cumulative CPUE for summer chum salmon is 27.92, which is below the historical median of 54.24. All CPUEs are current through June 6. While a few chum have been caught in LYTF, no large groups have been detected.

Any Chinook salmon healthy enough will be released alive from the test nets. Injured salmon and mortalities will be distributed to community members by Tribal councils, or on a first come, first-served basis from a public dock.

Sonar Project near Pilot Station/ ADF&G

The Pilot Station sonar began with a partial count on May 31 and full operations on June 1. Water levels are reported to be lower than last year with minimal debris. Chinook salmon passage is estimated to be 3,559 fish, which is above the historical cumulative average of 3,306 fish. Summer chum salmon passage is estimated to be 0 fish, which is below the historical cumulative median of 3,516 fish. All estimates are current through June 6.

ADF&G, USFWS, and TCC projects that will begin operations later this season when fish arrive in the area:

Anvik Sonar, Eagle Sonar, Salcha and Chena River Tower /Sonar (ADF&G); Andreafsky Weir and Teedriinjik (Chandalar) Sonar (USFWS); Henshaw Weir (TCC).

Due to staffing and COVID mitigation concerns, USFWS will not operate Gisasa Weir this year.

Current Subsistence Management Actions

Subsistence salmon fishing is being closed to protect Chinook salmon as they migrate upriver. The opportunity to harvest non-salmon with 4-inch or smaller mesh gillnets is available during salmon closures; however, 4-inch or smaller mesh gillnets are restricted to 60-feet or shorter length.

South Coastal District (from the Naskonat Peninsula north to 62 degrees North latitude which includes Hooper Bay and Scammon Bay):

Subsistence salmon fishing is currently closed. Gillnets of 4-inch or less mesh may be used to target non-salmon and are restricted in length to 60 feet.

North Coastal Area, District 1 and District 2 (from 62 degrees North latitude north to Point Romanof, including the Black River, and District 1 and 2 communities of Emmonak, Nunam Iqua, Alakanuk, Kotlik, Mountain Village, Pitkas Point, St. Mary's, Pilot Station, and Marshall):

Subsistence salmon fishing is currently closed. Gillnets of 4-inch or less mesh may be used to target non-salmon and are restricted in length to 60 feet.

District 3 (including Russian Mission and Holy Cross):

Subsistence fishing is currently open.

Effective 8 p.m. Monday, June 7, salmon fishing is closed. Gillnets larger than 4-inch mesh are not allowed. Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target non-salmon but are restricted to 60 feet maximum length.

Innoko River (community of Shageluk):

Subsistence fishing is currently open with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels.

Effective 8 p.m. Wednesday, June 9, salmon fishing is closed. Gillnets larger than 4-inch mesh are not allowed. Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target non-salmon but are restricted to 60 feet maximum length.

Subdistrict 4-A Lower (from ¾ of a mile downstream from Old Paradise Village upstream to Stink Creek,

including Grayling and Anvik):

Subsistence fishing is currently open with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels.

Effective 8 p.m., Thursday, June 10, salmon fishing is closed. Fish wheels and gillnets larger than 4-inch mesh are not allowed. Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target non-salmon but are restricted to 60 feet or shorter length.

Subdistrict 4-A Upper (from Stink Creek upstream to the tip of Cone Point, including Kaltag, Nulato, and Koyukuk):

Subsistence fishing is currently open with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels.

Effective 8 p.m., Sunday, June 13, salmon fishing is closed. Fish wheels and gillnets larger than 4-inch mesh are not allowed. Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target non-salmon but are restricted to 60 feet or shorter length.

Koyukuk River (including Huslia, Hughes, Alatna, Allakaket, and Bettles):

Subsistence fishing is currently open with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels.

Effective 8 p.m., Monday, June 14, salmon fishing is closed. Fish wheels and gillnets larger than 4-inch mesh are not allowed. Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target non-salmon but are restricted to 60 feet or shorter length.

A subsistence fishing permit is required for all species in the Koyukuk River above Bettles including the community of Wiseman.

District 5 (including Tanana, Rampart, Stevens Village, Beaver, Fort Yukon, Venetie, Birch Creek, Chalkyitsik, Circle, Central, and Eagle):

Subsistence fishing is currently open with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels.

A subsistence permit is required to fish for all species in portions of Subdistricts 5-C and 5-D from the western most tip of Garnet Island upstream to the mouth of Dall River (Dalton Highway bridge area) and from the upstream mouth of 22 Mile Slough to the U.S./Canada border.

Subdistricts 6-A and 6-B (from the mouth of the Tanana River upstream to the Wood River, including Manley, Minto, and Nenana):

Subsistence fishing is currently open with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels.

Kantishna River:

Subsistence fishing is currently open with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels.

Old Minto Area:

Subsistence fishing is currently open with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels.

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):

Subsistence fishing is currently open with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels.

Subdistrict 6-C Salmon (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):

By regulation, Personal Use fishing is open on a schedule of two 42-hour periods per week from:

6 p.m. Mondays to 12 p.m. (noon) Wednesdays

6 p.m. Fridays to 12 p.m. (noon) Sundays

Subdistrict 6-C Whitefish and Sucker Personal Use Fishing

Fishing for whitefish and suckers in this area remains open 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, subject to permit stipulations.

In the Tanana River up to the Wood River (Subdistrict 6-A and 6-B), and in the Upper Tanana River Area, a subsistence permit is required for salmon fishing. A personal use permit is required to fish for salmon and other species from the mouth of the Wood River upstream to the mouth of the Salcha River (Subdistrict 6-C). Fishermen may only use set gillnets and fishwheels in the Personal Use salmon fishery.

A subsistence permit is required for northern pike in the Tolovana River drainage, including Minto Flats.

Subsistence harvest calendars and subsistence fishing permits are available from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game Fairbanks office (459-7274) or online at www.adfg.alaska.gov/store/.

Commercial fishing

Commercial fishing will open in the Lower Yukon with selective gear types when the summer chum salmon run is projected to provide a harvestable surplus above the drainagewide escapement goal, and subsistence fishing opportunity has been provided.



This is an announcement by the ADF&G in cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The Emmonak USFWS office is not open. To reach the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Yukon River Subsistence Fishery Manager call 351-3029.



Announcements will be shared on Facebook at www.facebook.com/YukonRiverFishingADFG

COVID-19

Under Alaska's Health Advisories 1, 2, 3, and 4, subsistence and commercial fishing is considered essential 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 Advisories. COVID-19 Health Advisories may be found here: <https://covid19.alaska.gov/health-advisories/>.