

Division of Sport Fish

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Advisory Announcement

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COPPER RIVER PERSONAL USE DIP NET SALMON FISHING SCHEDULE:

WEEK OF JUNE 21

The Chitina Subdistrict will open for a 168-hour period from 12:01 a.m. Monday, June 21 through 11:59 p.m. Sunday, June 27. The Chitina Subdistrict personal use dip net fishery will be **closed to the retention of king salmon** for the remainder of season. King salmon incidentally taken must be released immediately and may not be removed from the water before being released.

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 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 7 – June 13, there were 147,560 salmon counted past the Miles Lake sonar. The preseason projection for this period was 74,327 salmon, which results in a surplus of 73,233 salmon. Copper River sockeye salmon migratory timing and the previous five-year average harvest and participation rates indicate sufficient numbers of salmon available to justify an increase of 24 hours above the preseason schedule to 168 hours of fishing time during the week of June 21 – 27.

The *Copper River King Salmon Fishery Management Plan* directs the department to manage the Copper River fisheries to achieve a sustainable escapement goal in the upper Copper River of 24,000 or more king salmon. The 2021 king salmon run to the Copper River appears to be substantially weaker than the preseason forecast of 37,000 king salmon. The cumulative

commercial harvest, as of June 15, is approximately 6,100 king salmon and is half the most recent five-year average for this date. Gulkana River tower counts and data from fish wheels at Baird and Canyon Creek indicate the escapement goal of 24,000 king salmon for the Copper River drainage may not be achieved. Therefore, prohibiting the retention of king salmon in the Chitina Subdistrict personal use dip net fishery is justified to ensure the sustainable escapement goal is achieved.

Additionally, ADF&G is reminding fishery users that all 2021 Chitina Personal Use Salmon Fishery permit participation and harvest reporting must be completed online at <https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/harvest>. Online reporting is required regardless if you purchased the permit through the ADF&G online store or through a vendor. Returning permits by mail or hand-delivery is no longer an acceptable means to report. Also, **permit holders who fail to report Chitina Personal Use Salmon Fishery harvest online by the October 15 reporting deadline 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.com/lands/land-permits/>)

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 is 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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