



Advisory Announcement

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Released: June 27, 2023

2023 Yukon River Salmon Summer Fishery Announcement #17

Summer Update #4, Yukon Area Salmon Fishery

Districts Affected: Yukon Area

The 2023 Chinook salmon run has reached the historical midpoint (June 25) at Pilot Station sonar. The run is entering the river slightly below forecast and similar to the very poor run observed in 2022. The run remains well below average and is unlikely to meet any escapement goals; therefore, Chinook salmon fishing remains closed. The first batch of genetic samples from Chinook salmon at Pilot Station sonar will be analyzed soon and will provide information about the size of the Canadian-origin run.

The 2023 summer chum salmon run has reached the historical first quarter point (June 22) at Pilot Station sonar. The summer chum salmon run is entering the river as forecasted and stronger than recent years. While the run still appears to be below average, projections are indicating the run will be above the lower end of the 500,000 to 1.2 million fish drainagewide escapement goal range. Therefore, a harvestable surplus of summer chum salmon for subsistence fishing is available. Consistent with the preseason management strategy, openings with selective gear types to harvest summer chum salmon are being announced based on regulatory schedules.

During selective gear openings, **all Chinook salmon must be released alive**. Fishermen are reminded to practice respectful and safe fish handling techniques and ensure any Chinook salmon caught in selective or nonsalmon gear types are released alive so they may continue upriver to their spawning grounds. If it appears that Chinook salmon are being targeted with this gear, fishing will be further restricted.

Assessment project and management updates will be shared during the weekly YR DFA teleconferences each **Tuesday at 1:00 p.m. (Alaska time). Call in number: 1-800-315-6338, Passcode: 98566#**

Assessment Projects

All assessment data is updated with data through June 25.

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

LYTF drift gillnet operations for Chinook and summer chum salmon began on June 5 at Big Eddy and Middle Mouth sites. Drift sites are continuing to experience high water. Multiple drift sessions have been cancelled due to poor fishing conditions and rough weather. The Big Eddy cumulative Chinook salmon CPUE in the 8.25-inch drift gillnet is 35.90, which is below the historic average of 279.33. The Middle Mouth cumulative Chinook salmon CPUE for the 8.25-inch drift gillnet is 27.66. The combined Chinook drift CPUE is 31.98, which is slightly below the 2021–2022 average of 33.94. The cumulative CPUE for summer chum salmon in the 5.5-inch drift gillnets is 732.17, which is below the historical median (2002–2022) of 1,759.0.

To reduce Chinook salmon mortality, set net sites will not be used this year at Big Eddy or Middle Mouth locations. All salmon will be released alive from the test nets if possible. Injured salmon and mortalities will be distributed to communities.

Data collected from Chinook and summer chum salmon will include ASL (Age, Sex, and Length). A few salmon of all species caught in LYTF will be sampled this year for other fish health research.

Pilot Station Sonar (ADF&G)

Pilot Station sonar began operations on June 6. Water levels are reported to be high but dropping with some debris. Sonar and test fishing operations have been proceeding as planned. Cumulative Chinook salmon passage is estimated to be 21,558 ± 8,439 fish (90% Confidence Interval), which is below the historical cumulative average of 95,439 for this date, based on normal run timing years, and 57,067 fish based on late run timing years. Summer chum salmon passage is estimated to be 278,214 ± 15,004 fish (90% Confidence Interval), which is below the historical cumulative median of 593,703 fish for this date based on normal timing years, and 340,747 fish based on late run timing years.

All Chinook salmon captured in the Pilot Station Sonar test fishery (PSSTF) will be sampled for age, sex, length and genetics, and most fish will be released alive. Additional biological sampling will be conducted for all Chinook salmon test fish mortalities as part of a broad collaborative effort to better understand salmon health and potential drivers of *en route* mortality and low productivity. Additional samples will include otoliths, heart, kidney, liver, intestine, eggs, blood, muscle biopsy, and fat content. The PSSTF heart samples will be used by ADF&G and USFWS, along with samples from other locations, to investigate the potential for *Ichthyophonus* associated mortality. Kidney samples from PSSTF are being tested for proliferative kidney disease. Fish health results will be available post season.

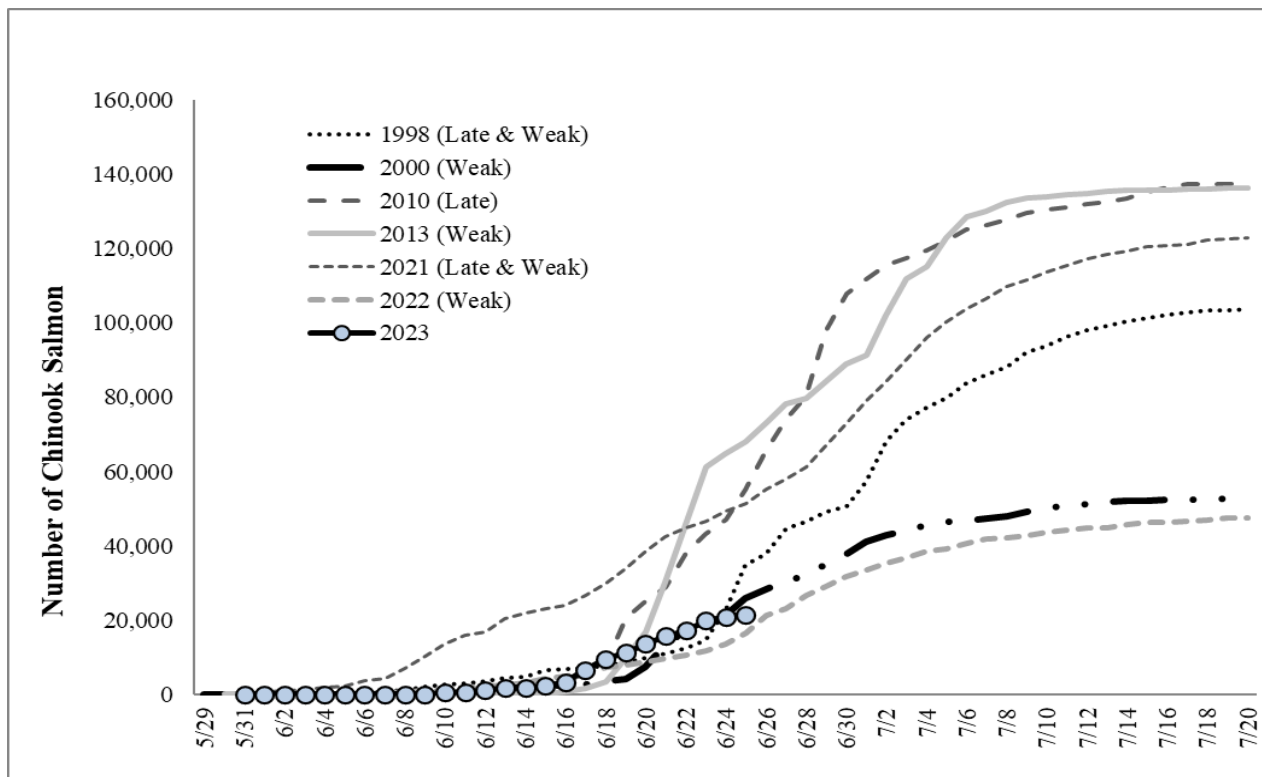


Figure 1. 2023 Cumulative passage of Chinook salmon at the Pilot Station sonar compared to late and/or weak years.

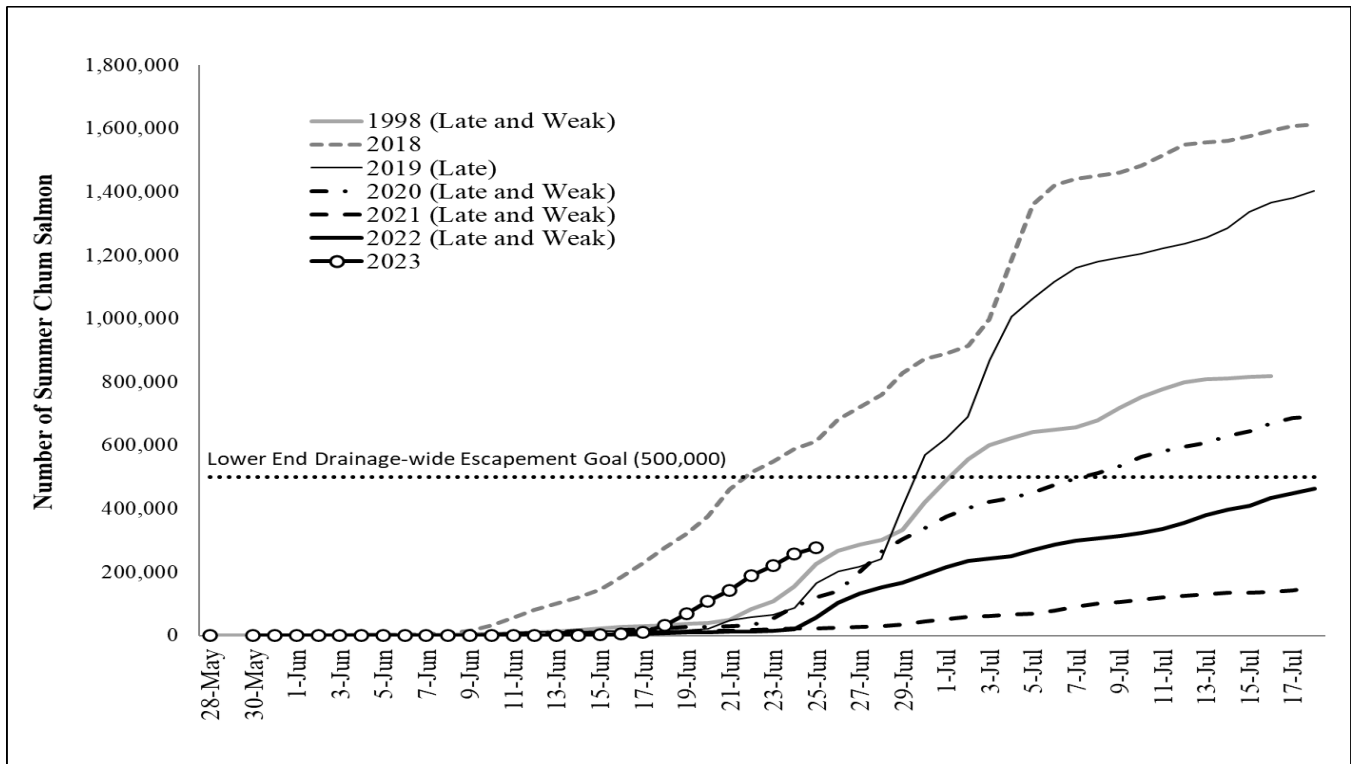


Figure 2. 2023 Cumulative passage of summer chum salmon at the Pilot Station sonar compared to late and/or weak years.

East Fork Andreafsky Weir (USFWS)

Crew is on site, but high water is delaying weir installation.

Anvik River Sonar Project (ADF&G)

Counts began on June 15. Cumulative passage is 725 summer chum salmon, which is below the cumulative median of 12,430 fish.

Gisasa Weir (USFWS)

Crew is in camp and experiencing high water in the Gisasa River which may delay weir installation.

Chinook Radio Telemetry (ADF&G)

2023 is the first year of a three-year effort to capture and tag up to 500 Chinook salmon near Emmonak and track upriver migration to evaluate concerns for *en route* mortality. The Chinook salmon radio telemetry tagging project experienced a delayed start and began tagging on June 19. So far this season, Chinook salmon catches using short 25-fathom drift gillnets have been very low due, in part, to high water conditions combined with poor run abundance. As such, only a few Chinook salmon have been tagged. Each fish was tagged with both an internal radio telemetry tag and an external spaghetti tag. **If you encounter a tagged fish this season and are successful at documenting the tag number, please call 1-877-467-2104 to report information about when and where the fish was observed.** As a thank you for voluntarily reporting the tag number and associated information, you will be automatically entered into the ADF&G salmon tag lottery. More information about the project can be found on posters in communities along the river or at the ADF&G offices in Anchorage, Fairbanks and Emmonak. Please contact Josh Clark at 907-267-2217 or Fred West at 907-267-2237 with any questions.

Alaska-based projects that will begin operations later this season:

Eagle Sonar (ADF&G), Salcha and Chena River Tower/Sonar (ADF&G), and Henshaw Weir (TCC).

Age, Sex, and Length Composition

The age composition of 85 summer chum salmon sampled from the drift gillnets in the LYTF project through June 16 was 54% age-4, which compares to a historical average of 30% for this date. The age-5 component made up 45% of the samples, which compares to a historical average of 65% for this date. Of the samples, 1% were age-6 fish, which compares to the historical average of 4% for this date. The age-4 fish average length of 556 mm and the age-5 average length of 569 mm are both similar compared to average (2013–2022). Female summer chum salmon are slightly lower at 54% compared to a historical average (2013–2022) of 59%.

Current Subsistence Management Actions

Most areas are already closed to protect migrating Chinook salmon or are closing before they arrive. In the lower river, opportunities to harvest summer chum salmon are being announced, and will move upriver based on migration timing. During summer chum salmon fishing openings with selective gear types, fishermen may use dip nets, beach seines, hook and line gear and manned fish wheels. **All Chinook salmon must be released alive.** Fish wheels must be manned at all times during operation; Chinook salmon may not enter a live box and must be immediately returned to the water using a chute, slide, tote or other fish friendly means.

Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used during salmon fishing closures to target nonsalmon. **Four-inch or smaller mesh gillnets must be 60 feet or less in length and operated as a set net.** Fishermen are reminded to set this gear near shore and in areas where nonsalmon species are abundant to avoid incidentally harvesting salmon. While any salmon caught in this gear may be kept, if it appears salmon are being targeted with this gear, it could be further restricted.

Other gear types for nonsalmon species include hook and line, dip net, beach seine, hand line, longline, fyke net, lead, and spear. The area where hook and line gear may be used for subsistence has been extended above the Nulato River, except for District 6 and some closed waters (Figure 3).

In Districts 3-6, submerged gillnets may be used for subsistence and personal use during ice-free months, however submerged nets must have a visible buoy or cluster of floats attached to both ends of the net, plus a third float in the middle if the net is over 60 feet in length.

All gillnets must be marked with a buoy, float, or keg that has the fisherman's first initial, last name, and address.

Coastal District (from the Naskonat Peninsula north to one mile south of the mouth of the Black River which includes the communities of Chevak, Hooper Bay, and Scammon Bay):

Effective 8 p.m. Monday, June 26, fishing for summer chum salmon is open with dip nets, beach seines, and hook and line gear 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. Summer chum, pink, and sockeye salmon may be kept. All Chinook salmon must be released alive.

Nonsalmon gear types and 4-inch or smaller mesh gillnets for nonsalmon may be used 24 hours a day, 7 days per week. Gillnets are restricted to 60 feet in length and must be operated as a set net. Nets should be set near shore. Fishermen should avoid fishing in areas where Chinook salmon are passing.

District 1 (from one mile south of the mouth of the Black River along the coast to Point Romanof and including the Black River and the communities of Emmonak, Nunam Iqua, Alakanuk, and Kotlik):

Effective 8 p.m. Monday, June 26, fishing for summer chum salmon is open with selective gear types for two 36-hour periods per week from:

8 p.m. Mondays to 8 a.m. Wednesdays

8 p.m. Thursdays to 8 a.m. Saturdays

During selective gear openings, dip nets, beach seines, and hook and line gear may be used for summer chum, pink, and sockeye salmon. All Chinook salmon must be released alive.

Nonsalmon gear types and 4-inch or smaller mesh gillnets for nonsalmon may be used 24 hours a day, 7 days per week. Gillnets are restricted to 60 feet in length and must be operated as a set net. Nets should be set near shore. Fishermen should avoid fishing in areas where Chinook salmon are passing.

District 2 (including Mountain Village, Pitkas Point, St. Mary's, Pilot Station, and Marshall):

Subsistence salmon fishing is currently closed.

Effective 8 p.m. Wednesday, June 28, fishing for summer chum salmon will open with selective gear types for two 36-hour periods per week from:

8 p.m. Wednesdays to 8 a.m. Fridays

8 p.m. Sundays to 8 a.m. Tuesdays

During selective gear openings, dip nets, beach seines, and hook and line gear may be used for summer chum, pink, and sockeye salmon. All Chinook salmon must be released alive.

Nonsalmon gear types and 4-inch or smaller mesh gillnets for nonsalmon may be used 24 hours a day, 7 days per week. Gillnets are restricted to 60 feet in length and must be operated as a set net. Nets should be set near shore. Fishermen should avoid fishing in areas where Chinook salmon are passing.

District 3 and Innoko River (including Russian Mission, Holy Cross, and Shageluk):

Subsistence salmon fishing is currently closed.

Effective 8 p.m. Wednesday, June 28, fishing for summer chum salmon is open with selective gear types for two 36-hour periods per week from:

8 p.m. Wednesdays to 8 a.m. Fridays

8 p.m. Sundays to 8 a.m. Tuesdays

During selective gear openings, dip nets, beach seines, hook and line, and manned fish wheels may be used for summer chum, pink, and sockeye salmon. All Chinook salmon must be released alive.

Nonsalmon gear types and 4-inch or smaller mesh gillnets for nonsalmon may be used 24 hours a day, 7 days per week. Gillnets are restricted to 60 feet in length and must be operated as a set net. Nets should be set near shore. Fishermen should avoid fishing in areas where Chinook salmon are passing.

District 4 (including Grayling Anvik, Kaltag, Nulato, Koyukuk, Galena, and Ruby):

Salmon fishing is closed. Fish wheels and gillnets larger than 4-inch are not allowed. Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon and are restricted to 60-feet or less in length and must be operated as a set net. Nets should be set near shore.

Dip nets, beach seines, and hook and line gear may be used for nonsalmon species and pink and sockeye salmon; however, Chinook and summer chum salmon must be released alive.

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. Thursday, June 29, salmon fishing is closed. Fish wheels and gillnets larger than 4-inch are not allowed. Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon and are restricted to 60-feet or less in length. Nets should be set near shore.

Dip nets, beach seines, and hook and line gear may be used for nonsalmon species, pink and sockeye salmon; however, Chinook and summer chum salmon must be released alive.

A subsistence fishing permit is required for all species in the South and Middle forks of the Koyukuk River above Bettles including the community of Wiseman. Gillnet gear in the permit area may only be used from August 20 to June 30 and must be 3½ inches or smaller mesh size. If you are outside the permit area, contact the Fairbanks office at 907-459-7274 for a subsistence harvest calendar.

Subdistricts 5-A, 5-B, and 5-C (including Tanana and Rampart):

Salmon fishing is closed. Fish wheels and gillnets larger than 4-inch are not allowed. Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon and are restricted to 60-feet or less in length and must be operated as a set net. Nets should be set near shore.

Dip nets, beach seines, and hook and line gear may be used for nonsalmon species, pink and sockeye salmon; however, Chinook and summer chum salmon must be released alive.

Subdistrict 5-D Lower (from an ADF&G regulatory marker two miles downstream of Waldron Creek upstream to the Hadweenzic River and all other adjacent tributaries, including the communities of Stevens Village and Beaver):

Subsistence fishing is currently open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets.

Effective 8 p.m. Thursday, June 29, salmon fishing is closed. Fish wheels and gillnets larger than 4-inch are not allowed. Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon and are restricted to 60-feet or less in length and must be operated as a set net. Nets should be set near shore.

Dip nets, beach seines, and hook and line gear may be used for nonsalmon species. Chinook salmon must be released alive.

A subsistence permit is required to fish for all species in the portion of Subdistrict 5-D Lower from an ADF&G regulatory marker two miles downstream of Waldron Creek upstream to the mouth of Dall River.

Subdistrict 5-D Middle (from the Hadweenzic River upstream to 22 Mile Slough, including the Porcupine River, all other adjacent tributaries, and the communities of Venetie, Chalkyitsik, Birch Creek and Fort Yukon):

Subsistence fishing is currently open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets.

Effective 8 p.m. Sunday, July 2, salmon fishing is closed. Fish wheels and gillnets larger than 4-inch are not allowed. Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon and are restricted to 60-feet or less in length and must be operated as a set net. Nets should be set near shore.

Dip nets, beach seines, and hook and line gear may be used for nonsalmon species. Chinook salmon must be released alive.

Subdistrict 5-D Upper (from 22 Mile Slough to the U.S./Canada border, including all adjacent tributaries and the communities of Circle and Eagle):

Subsistence fishing is currently open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets.

Effective 8 p.m. Tuesday, July 4, salmon fishing is closed. Fish wheels and gillnets larger than 4-inch are not allowed. Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon and are restricted to 60-feet or less in length and must be operated as a set net. Nets should be set near shore.

Dip nets, beach seines, and hook and line gear may be used for nonsalmon species. Chinook salmon must be released alive.

A subsistence permit is required to fish for all species from the upstream mouth of 22 Mile Slough to the U.S./Canada border.

Subdistrict 6-A and Kantishna River (from the mouth of the Tanana River upstream to the eastern edge of the mouth of the Kantishna River, including the Kantishna River drainage, Lake Minchumina, and Manley):

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

Effective 8 p.m. Tuesday, June 27, salmon fishing is closed. Fish wheels and gillnets larger than 4-inch are not allowed. Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon and are restricted to 60-feet or less in length and must be operated as a set net. Nets should be set near shore.

Dip nets and beach seines may be used for nonsalmon species, pink and sockeye salmon; however, Chinook and summer chum salmon must be released alive.

Subsistence fishing for nonsalmon is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 6-inch or smaller mesh gillnets in Lake Minchumina.

Subdistrict 6-B and Old Minto Area (from eastern edge of the Kantishna River upstream to the Wood River, including Minto and Nenana):

Subsistence fishing is currently open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets.

Effective 8 p.m. Thursday, June 29, salmon fishing is closed. Fish wheels and gillnets larger than 4-inch are not allowed. Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon and are restricted to 60-feet or less in length and must be operated as a set net. Nets should be set near shore.

Dip nets and beach seines may be used for nonsalmon species, pink and sockeye salmon; however, Chinook and summer chum salmon must be released alive.

Subsistence fishing for nonsalmon is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 6-inch or smaller mesh gillnets in the Tolovana River drainage, including Minto Flats. Note, a subsistence pike permit is required, see details below.

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, including Delta Junction area, Dot Lake, Tanacross, Tetlin, Tok, Northway, and Nabesna):

Subsistence fishing is currently open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets.

Effective 8 p.m. Monday, July 3, salmon fishing is closed. Fish wheels and gillnets larger than 4-inch are not allowed. Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon and are restricted to 60-feet or less in length and must be operated as a set net. Nets should be set near shore.

Dip nets and beach seines may be used for nonsalmon species, pink and sockeye salmon; however, Chinook and summer chum salmon must be released alive.

A reminder to fishermen that a subsistence permit is required to fish for salmon in the Tanana River drainage up to the Wood River (Subdistrict 6-A, 6-B, and Kantishna River drainage), northern pike in the Tolovana River drainage (including Minto Flats), and all species in the Upper Tanana Area. A subsistence salmon permit is not required in Lake Minchumina.

Personal Use Management Actions

Subdistrict 6-C (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):

Personal Use salmon fishing is open with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels for two 42-hour periods per week from:

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

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

Effective 12 p.m. (noon) Sunday, July 2, Personal Use salmon fishing is closed and periods are cancelled until further notice.

Personal Use Whitefish and Sucker Fishing

Fairbanks Nonsubsistence Area (a portion of the Tanana River drainage from the Wood River upstream to the mouth of the Volkmar River on the north bank and the mouth of the Johnson River on the south bank, which includes Fairbanks, North Pole, Salcha, and Delta Junction):

Personal Use whitefish and sucker fishing with gillnets and fish wheels follows the Subdistrict 6-C Personal Use salmon fishing schedule and will close at 12 p.m. (noon) Sunday, July 2 until further notice. Fishing with other gear for whitefish and suckers in this area remains open 7 days per week, 24 hours per day, subject to permit stipulations.

A reminder to personal use fishermen that a personal use salmon permit is required to fish for salmon in Subdistrict 6-C and a personal use whitefish and sucker permit is required to fish for these species in the Fairbanks Nonsubsistence Area. Both permits require a valid sport fishing license.

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 907-459-7274 or online at www.adfg.alaska.gov/store/.

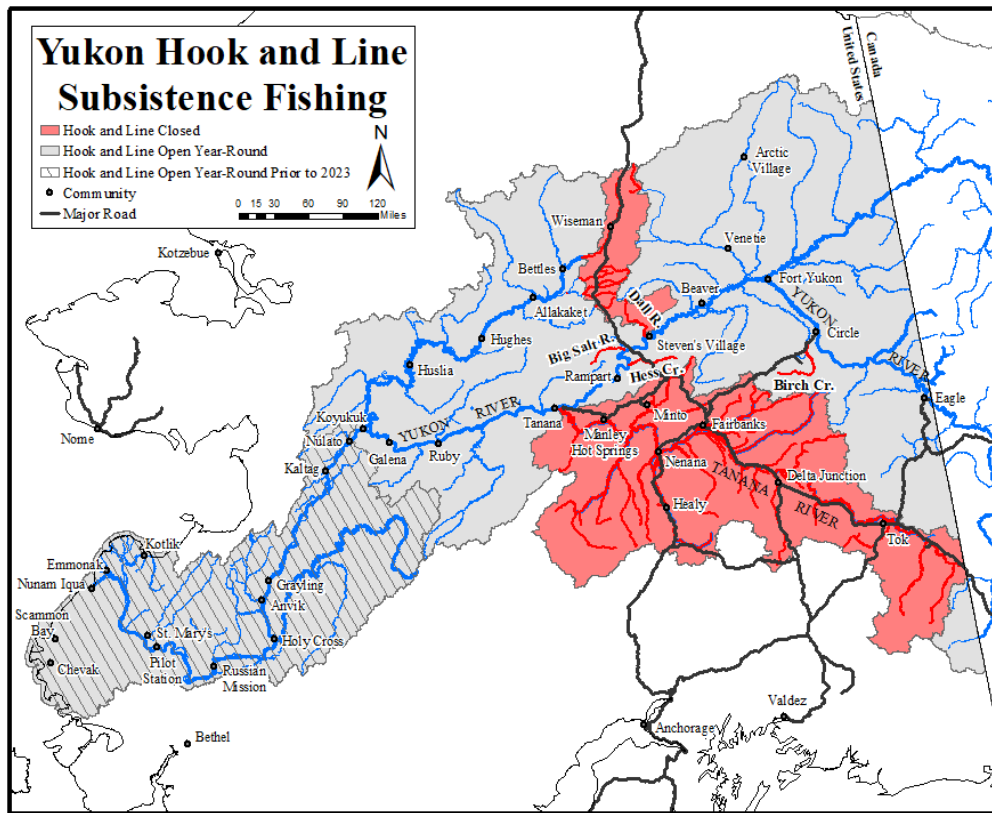


Figure 3. Areas where hook and line are legal as a subsistence fishing gear type in the Yukon Area (gray shaded areas). Closed areas for subsistence fishing with hook and line (red/darker shaded areas) include the Tanana River drainage, Big Salt River, Hess Creek, Dall River drainage, Birch Creek upstream of the Steese Highway bridge, Fish Creek drainage upstream from the mouth of Bonanza Creek, Bonanza Creek drainage, Kanuti River drainage upstream from a point 5 miles downstream of the state highway crossing, and Jim River drainage.

The ADF&G Emmonak office is open Mondays to Fridays 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturdays 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. (closed Sundays).

Federal Special Action

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) have coordinated on this advisory announcement. The Federal manager issued Federal emergency special action [FSA 2-KS-01-23](https://www.doi.gov/sites/doi.gov/files/fsa-02-ks-01-23-coast-y1-2-3-selective-fishing.pdf) June 23 to coincide with ADF&G’s Advisory Announcements #15 and #16. <https://www.doi.gov/sites/doi.gov/files/fsa-02-ks-01-23-coast-y1-2-3-selective-fishing.pdf>

This emergency special action restricts the selective gear opportunities for summer chum salmon to federally-qualified subsistence users only in federal public waters. The Emmonak USFWS office is not open. To reach the USFWS Yukon River Subsistence Fishery Manager, call Holly Carroll at 907-351-3029.



This is an announcement by the ADF&G and the USFWS. Federal Special Actions will be posted on www.doi.gov/subsistence/fisheries-special-actions.

ADF&G Advisory Announcements will be posted on www.cfnews.adfg.alaska.gov/ and shared on Facebook at www.facebook.com/YukonRiverFishingADFG.

