



## Advisory Announcement

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## CONTACT:

**Christy Gleason, Area Management Biologist**  
**Shane Ransbury, Asst. Area Management Biologist**  
**Bonnie Borba, Fall Season Research Biologist**  
**907-459-7274 (Fairbanks)**  
**Toll free fishing schedule and counts: 1-866-479-7387**

### **2023 Yukon River Salmon Fall Fishery Announcement #10** **Fall Update #6, Yukon Area Salmon Fishery**

The 2023 fall chum salmon run is nearing conclusion and projected to be a run size less than 300,000 fish. Genetic analysis applied to the fish passage estimates at the Yukon River mainstem sonar near Pilot Station indicate 250,000 fall chum salmon are in the river as of August 28 (Figure 1). The projection is unlikely to meet the drainagewide escapement goal of 300,000–600,000 fall chum salmon, tributary escapement goals, and Canadian treaty objectives. Therefore, subsistence, personal use, and commercial fishing for fall chum salmon remain closed.

Coho salmon have arrived later and weaker than average in all the Lower Yukon River assessment projects. At the mainstem Yukon River sonar project near Pilot Station, 29,000 coho salmon have been counted as of August 28, compared to a historical cumulative of 145,000 for this date (Figure 2). The coho salmon run is past the midpoint of the run. The coho salmon inseason projection is for a run size of less than 55,000 fish which is well below the average run size of 222,000 fish.

Daily, cumulative, and historical data for most of the assessment projects listed can be accessed online at [www.adfg.alaska.gov/yukonfishcounts](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/yukonfishcounts).

The Emmonak ADF&G office will close for the season August 30. Please contact the Fairbanks ADF&G Office at (907) 459-7274 for the remainder of the year.

### **Fall Assessment Projects**

Updated with data through August 28.

#### Lower Yukon River Cooperative Fall Drift Test Fishing / ADF&G, YDFDA

The fall chum salmon cumulative CPUE was 714.96, which is below the average of 1,388.12. The coho salmon cumulative CPUE was 80.65, which is below the average of 317.16. The three-quarter point for coho salmon typically occurs on August 26.

#### Mountain Village Drift Test Fishing / Asacarsarmiut Tribal Council

The fall chum salmon cumulative CPUE is 2,419.68, which is above the average of 1,769.35. The coho salmon cumulative CPUE was 144.21, which is below the average of 755.56. The three-quarter point for coho salmon typically occurs on August 29.

Sonar Project near Pilot Station / ADF&G

Genetic mixed stock analysis (MSA) was applied to the sonar passage counts and resulted in an estimate of 250,000 fall chum salmon that have entered the river since July 19 (Figure 1). This level of passage is below the median cumulative passage of 742,000 fall chum salmon.

The cumulative passage of coho salmon is approximately 29,000 (Figure 2), which is well below the median of 145,000 fish. The three-quarter point of coho salmon passage is typically August 31 at this site.

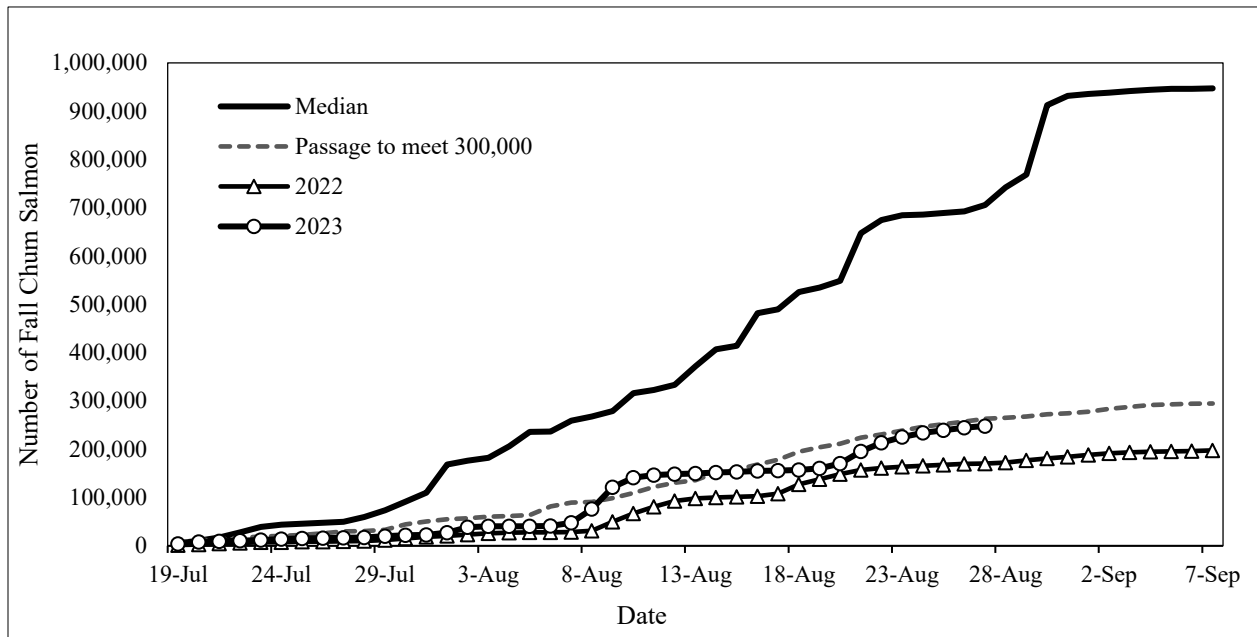


Figure 1. Cumulative passage of fall chum salmon using the mainstem Yukon River sonar assessment project (Pilot Station) in 2023 compared to the historical median and 2022. The dashed line is the passage required to meet the lower end of the drainagewide escapement goal.

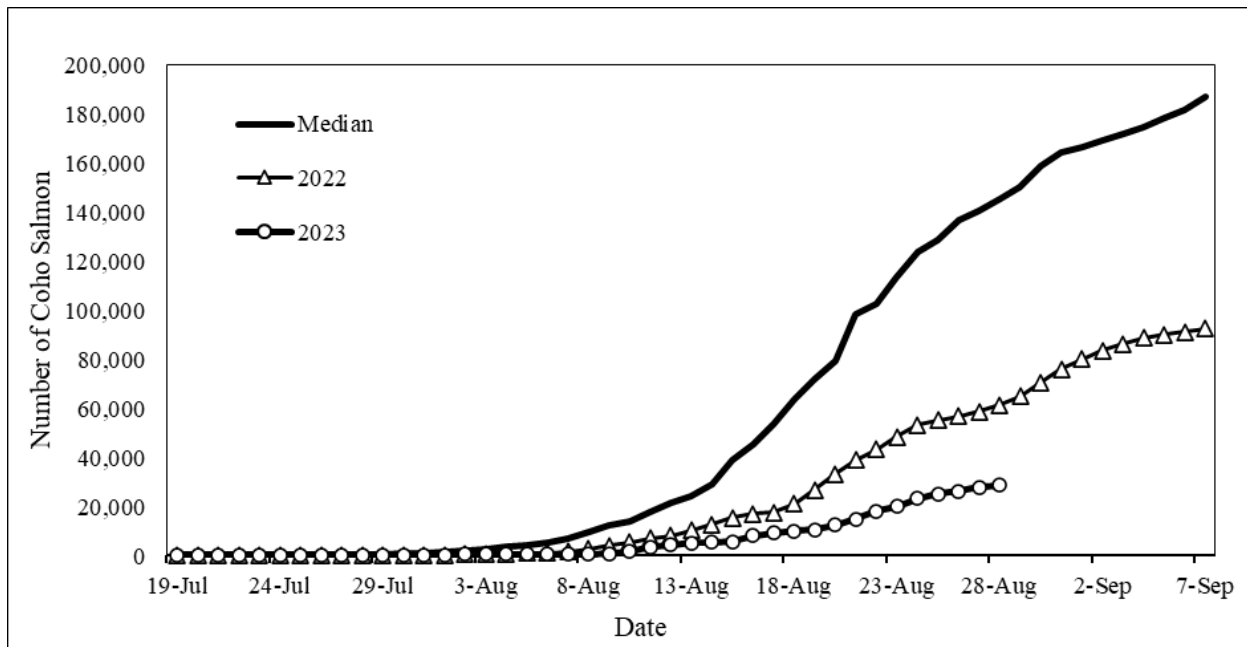


Figure 2. Cumulative passage of coho salmon using the mainstem Yukon River sonar assessment project (Pilot Station) in 2023 compared to the historical median and 2022.

Teedriinjik (Chandalar) Sonar / USFWS

The sonar project began operations on August 8 and has a cumulative passage of 9,900 fall chum salmon, which is below the median passage of 27,000 fish. The first-quarter point for fall chum salmon typically occurs on September 5 at this project. The Teedriinjik escapement goal range is 85,000–234,000 fall chum salmon.

Sheenjek River Sonar / ADF&G

The sonar project began operations on August 6 and has a cumulative passage of 1,073 fall chum salmon, which is below the median passage of 6,500 fish. The first-quarter point for fall chum salmon typically occurs on September 7 at this project.

Eagle Sonar / ADF&G and Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO)

This project transitioned to counting fall chum salmon on August 28. The first day was estimated to be 123 fall chum salmon, which is below the median passage for this date is 2,900 fish.

Porcupine River Sonar / Yukon Territory Canada / DFO

This sonar project transitioned to counting fall chum salmon on August 20. The cumulative passage of 317 fall chum salmon is below the median passage of 2,500 fish. The first-quarter point for fall chum salmon typically occurs on September 4 at this project.

Fishing Branch River Weir/Sonar / Yukon Territory Canada / DFO

This project will begin counting fall chum salmon in late August or early September.

**Summer Assessment Projects**Eagle Sonar / ADF&G

This project transitioned to counting fall chum salmon on August 28. The preliminary inseason cumulative passage was 15,304 Chinook salmon, which was below the cumulative average of 51,688 fish. The Eagle sonar project is used to assess the number of Canadian-origin Chinook and fall chum salmon that enter Canada. End of season sonar estimates will be used, along with other information, to calculate total border passage and escapement in Canada.

Chinook Radio Telemetry (ADF&G)

Tagging fish in the lower river concluded on July 15 for the season, but tracking operations are ongoing. 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. Please contact Josh Clark at 907-267-2217 or Fred West at 907-267-2237 with any questions.

**Stock Identification**

Genetic mixed stock analysis on chum salmon that passed the mainstem sonar from August 14–20 is on the way to the lab. The results will be reported in next week's Advisory Announcement Fall Update #7. The previous group, from August 1–13, indicated fall chum salmon were 85% U.S.-origin and 15% Canada-origin stocks. This Canadian proportion is below the long-term average but is tracking with the poorer stock composition for Canada stock in the recent three years. On average more than 95% of the fish are fall chum salmon for the remainder of the run.

Genetic mixed stock analysis on the last large group and remaining Chinook salmon that passed the Pilot Station sonar from July 4–23 indicated 48% were of Canadian-origin. The preliminary weighted total season Canadian-origin percentage was also 48%. Final results will be available later this winter.

## Age, Sex, and Length Composition

The age composition of 408 chum salmon sampled from the drift gillnets in the LYTF project through August 20, consisted of 78% age-4 and 18% age-5 fish, which compared to the 1983–2022 historical averages of 66% age-4 and 31% age-5. The percentage of female chum salmon through August 28 was 52% which is below the 1986–2022 historical average of 58%. The average length of 572 mm is well below the 1981–2022 historical average of 592 mm, however they are much larger than the previous two years.

## Current Subsistence Management Actions

### Nonsalmon

Harvest of nonsalmon with 4-inch or smaller mesh set gillnets of 60 feet or shorter length is allowed in all subsistence areas. Fishermen should fish this nonsalmon gear in areas where resident species are more likely to be encountered. Other legal gear types to take nonsalmon include hook and line with a rod or pole (excluding District 6), hand line, longline, fyke net, dip net, beach seine, and spear. If closures are in place for a salmon species, they must be released alive immediately from nonsalmon gear (other than 4-inch or smaller mesh gillnets).

### Salmon

**Coastal District, Districts 1, 2, 3, and 4, Subdistricts 5-A, 5-B, and 5-C, and the Innoko, Anvik, and Koyukuk river drainages (including Chevak through Rampart):**

**Chum salmon fishing is closed.** Dip nets, beach seines, manned fish wheels, and hook and line gear may be used for nonsalmon and pink, sockeye, and coho salmon. Chinook and 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 communities of Wiseman and Coldfoot. Gillnet gear for nonsalmon in this permit area may only be used from August 20 to June 30 and must be 3½ inches or smaller mesh size. A subsistence permit is also required to fish for all species in Subdistrict 5-C from the western most tip of Garnet Island upstream to the ADF&G regulatory marker two miles downstream of Waldron Creek (Dalton Highway bridge area).

**Subdistrict 5-D (including Stevens Village through Eagle):**

**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-foot or less in length and must be operated as a set net near shore.

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 and from the upstream mouth of 22 Mile Slough to the U.S./Canada border.

**Subdistricts 6-A and 6-B (including the Kantishna River drainage and Manley through Nenana) and the Upper Tanana Area (including the Delta Junction area through Nabesna):**

**Chum and Chinook salmon fishing is closed.** Dip nets, beach seines, and manned fish wheels may be used for nonsalmon and coho salmon. Chum and Chinook 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 and in the Tolovana River drainage, including Minto Flats (see fishing permit requirements).

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 Salmon** (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 closed.**

**Personal Use Whitefish and Sucker Fishing** (in the 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 is closed.** Fishing for whitefish and suckers in this area with other gear types remains open 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, subject to permit stipulations.

A personal use permit and fishing license are required to fish for whitefish and sucker in the Fairbanks Nonsubsistence Area. Permits and licenses are available from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game Fairbanks office or online at [www.adfg.alaska.gov/store/](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/store/).

### **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. Fishermen must be Federally qualified subsistence users to harvest salmon in Federal public waters. For information regarding Federal subsistence fishing regulations contact Holly Carroll at 907-351-3029.

This is an announcement by the ADF&G in cooperation with the USFWS.

Federal Special Actions are posted on [www.doi.gov/subsistence/fisheries-special-actions](http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/fisheries-special-actions) and shared on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/subsistencealaska](https://www.facebook.com/subsistencealaska).

ADF&G Advisory Announcements and fish counts can be obtained by visiting [www.facebook.com/YukonRiverFishingADFG](https://www.facebook.com/YukonRiverFishingADFG) or [www.adfg.alaska.gov/yukonfishcounts](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/yukonfishcounts).

To receive advisory announcements by email, sign up at [www.cfnews.adfg.alaska.gov](http://www.cfnews.adfg.alaska.gov).

To receive fish counts by email, sign up at [www.list.state.ak.us/mailman/listinfo/yukonriverdailyupdate](http://www.list.state.ak.us/mailman/listinfo/yukonriverdailyupdate).

