



## Advisory Announcement

**Released: September 19, 2023**

## 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 #16** **Fall Update #9, Yukon Area Salmon Fishery**

The Yukon River fall chum salmon run is the fifth lowest on record (1974–2022), while the coho salmon run is the second lowest (1995–2022). The fall chum salmon run is projected to be just under 300,000 fish compared to a historical run size of 1 million fish. The coho salmon run is projected to be near 65,000 fish compared to a historical run size of 222,000 fish.

The Teedriinjik (Chandalar River) goal of 85,000–234,000 fall chum salmon was met and subsistence fishing for fall chum salmon was opened in this river in mid-September. The other Yukon River and Canadian-origin fall chum salmon stocks are poor and unlikely to be meet escapement goals; therefore, the remainder of the middle and upper Yukon River drainage remains closed to subsistence, personal use, sport, and commercial fishing for fall chum and coho salmon. As fall chum and coho salmon runs are nearing completion in the lower Yukon River, fishing restrictions will be lifted beginning in the Lower Yukon. Closures will remain in effect in important salmon spawning drainages through December.

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).

#### **Fall Assessment Projects**

Updated with data through September 17.

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

This project concluded on September 10 with a fall chum salmon cumulative CPUE of 884.37, which is below the average of 1,477.48. The coho salmon cumulative CPUE was 111.03, which is below the average of 380.54.

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

This project concluded on September 12 with a fall chum salmon cumulative CPUE of 2,752.68, which is above the average of 2,032.08. The coho salmon cumulative CPUE was 276.21, which is below the average of 1,083.86.

##### Sonar Project near Pilot Station / ADF&G

This project concluded on September 7. Genetic mixed stock analysis (MSA) was applied to the sonar passage counts and resulted in an estimate of 290,000 fall chum salmon that have entered the river since July 19 (Figure 1). This level of passage is below the median cumulative passage of 947,000 fall chum salmon. The cumulative passage of coho salmon is approximately 50,000 (Figure 2), which is well below the median of 187,000 fish.

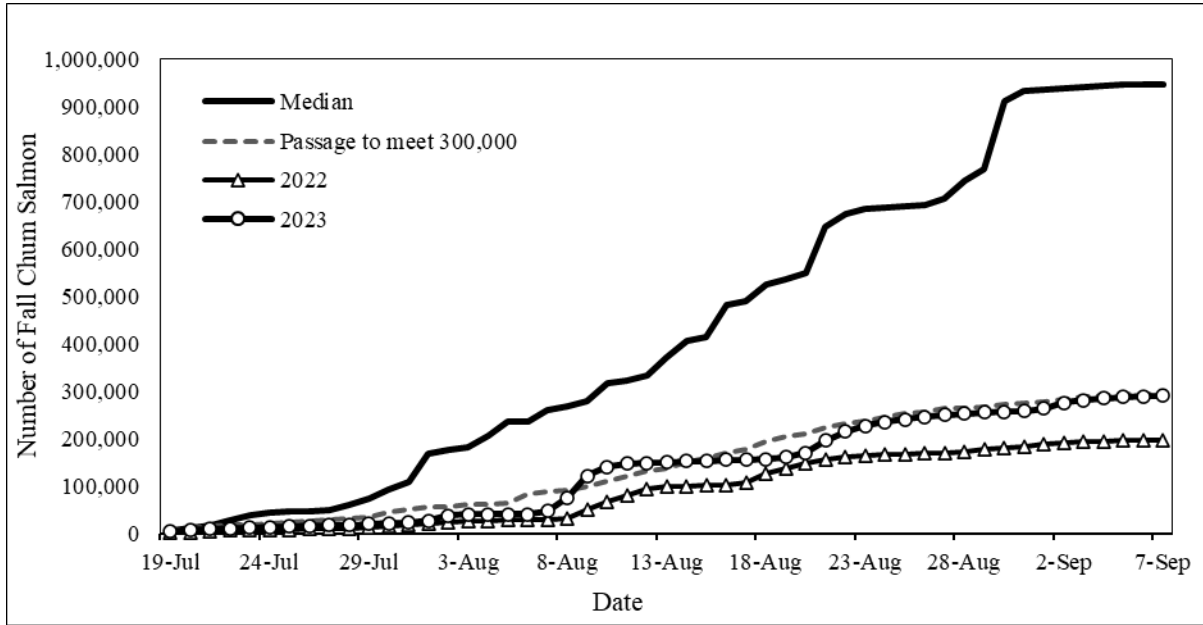


Figure 1. Cumulative passage of fall chum salmon using the mainstem Yukon River sonar assessment project (Pilot Station) in 2023 compared to the historical median and 2022. The dashed line is the passage required to meet the lower end of the drainagewide escapement goal.

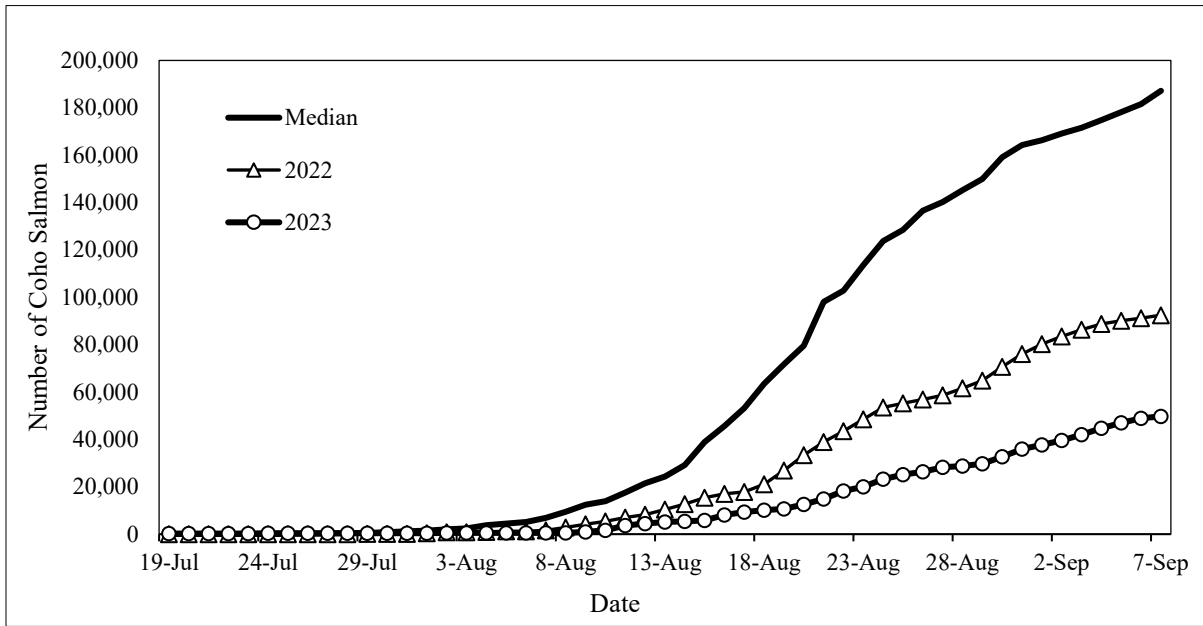


Figure 2. Cumulative passage of coho salmon using the mainstem Yukon River sonar assessment project (Pilot Station) in 2023 compared to the historical median and 2022.

Teedriinjik (Chandalar) Sonar / USFWS

The sonar project began operations on August 8 and has a cumulative passage of 89,000 fall chum salmon, which is below the median passage of 129,000 fish. The mid-point typically occurs on September 13. The lower end of the Teedriinjik escapement goal range of 85,000–234,000 fall chum salmon has been exceeded.

### Sheenjek River Sonar / ADF&G

The sonar project began operations on August 6 and has a cumulative passage of 9,300 fall chum salmon, which is below the median passage of 51,000 fish. The mid-point for fall chum salmon typically occurs on September 14 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 and has a cumulative passage of 7,887 fish, which is below the median passage of 40,000 fish. The first-quarter point for fall chum salmon typically occurs on September 16 at this project.

### Porcupine River Sonar / Yukon Territory Canada / DFO

This sonar project transitioned to counting fall chum salmon on August 20. As of September 10, the cumulative passage of 3,089 fall chum salmon is below the median passage of 11,000 fish. The mid-point for fall chum salmon typically occurs on September 14 at this project.

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

This project began operations on August 30. As of September 9, the cumulative passage is 504 fall chum salmon, which is below the median passage of 2,100 fish.

## **Stock Identification**

The last genetics samples of the season were processed. The last stratum of genetics passed the mainstem sonar from August 14–20 resulted in 70% Tanana Fall, 11% Border U.S. (Teedriinjik, Sheenjek, and Draanjik), and 14% Canada. Overall, since July 19, the run consists of 84% U.S.-origin and 16% Canada-origin fall chum salmon stocks. The Canadian proportion is below the long-term average and is tracking with the poorer stock composition observed for Canada in the recent three years.

## **Age, Sex, and Length Composition**

The age composition of 643 chum salmon sampled from the drift gillnets in the LYTF project through September 4, consisted of 79% age-4 and 18% age-5 fish, which compared to the 1983–2022 historical averages of 67% age-4 and 30% age-5. The percentage of female chum salmon through September 4 was 54%, 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.

The age composition of 121 coho salmon sampled from the drift gillnets in the LYTF project through September 4, consisted of 19% age-3 and 79% age-4 fish, which compared to the 1983–2022 historical averages of 16% age-3 and 76% age-4. The percentage of female chum salmon through September 4 was 40%, which is below the 1986–2022 historical average of 47%. The average length of 540 mm is well below the 1981–2022 historical average of 575 mm.

## **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. Harvest of nonsalmon with 6-inch or smaller mesh set gillnets of 60 feet or shorter is allowed in Lake Minchumina and in the Tolovana River drainage, including Minto Flats (see fishing permit requirements). 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 gillnets).

## Salmon

### **Coastal District and Districts 1-3** (including Chevak through Holy Cross and the Innoko River):

Effective at the dates and times listed below, subsistence fishing for all species will be open 24 hours per day, 7 days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and all other legal salmon gear. All fish caught may be retained. Gillnet lengths will no longer be restricted to 60 feet and drift gillnets are allowed.

- Effective **8:00 a.m. Sunday, October 1** in the Coastal District and District 1 (Chevak, Hooper Bay, Scammon Bay, Emmonak, Nunam Iqua, Alakanuk, and Kotlik).
- Effective **8:00 a.m. Tuesday, October 3** in District 2 (Mountain Village, Pitkas Point, St. Mary's, Pilot Station, and Marshall).
- Effective **8:00 a.m. Saturday, October 7** in District 3 (Russian Mission, Holy Cross, and Shageluk).

### **Districts 4-6** (including Anvik through Eagle and the Koyukuk and Tanana rivers):

**Fishing for chum, coho, and Chinook salmon is closed except in the Teedriinjik (Chandalar River) drainage.** Dip nets, beach seines, manned fish wheels, and hook and line gear may be used for pink salmon and sockeye salmon in all districts except District 6, where hook and line is closed for all species. Chum, coho, and Chinook salmon must be released alive.

#### **In the Teedriinjik drainage** (Figure 1):

**Fishing for chum salmon is open** 24 hours per day, 7 days per week with 6-inch or smaller mesh set gillnets, fish wheels, dip nets, hook and line, handline, and beach seines.

**Closed Waters:** The North Fork of the Teedriinjik drainage upstream from the mouth of Quartz Creek will remain closed by regulation.

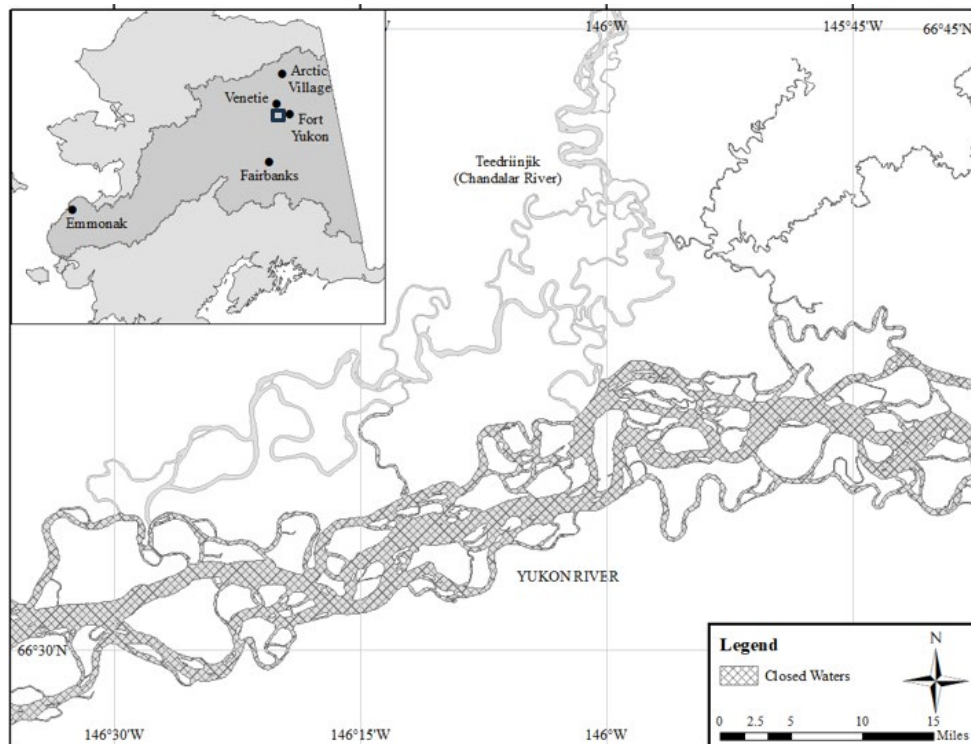


Figure 1. Map showing Yukon River waters area near Teedriinjik (Chandalar River) mouths that will remain closed to subsistence fishing.

A subsistence fishing permit is required in the following areas:

*All species*

- The South and Middle forks of the Koyukuk River above Bettles (including the communities of Wiseman and Coldfoot). Gillnet gear for nonsalmon in the Koyukuk permit area may only be used from August 20 to June 30 and must be 3½ inches or smaller mesh size.
- 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).
- The portion of Subdistrict 5-D Lower from an ADF&G regulatory marker two miles downstream of Waldron Creek upstream to the mouth of the Dall River.
- The upstream mouth of 22 Mile Slough to the U.S./Canada border.
- The Upper Tanana Area.

*Salmon*

- The Tanana River drainage up to the Wood River (Subdistrict 6-A, 6-B, and the Kantishna River drainage), excluding Lake Minchumina.

*Northern pike*

- The Tolovana River drainage (including Minto Flats).

## 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/).

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](http://www.facebook.com/subsistencealaska).

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

